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George Frederic Parsons.

MEMOIRS

OF

BARON STOCKMAR.

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MEMOIRS

OF

BARON STOCKMAR.

BY HIS SON

BARON E. VON STOCKMAR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY G. A. M.

EDITED BY

F. MAX MÜLLER.

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MEMOIRS

OF

BARON STOCKMAR.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FURTHER HISTORY OF THE QUEEN'S MARRIAGE.

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THE new task which fell to Stockmar's lot in the year 1838, after his return from England, had reference to the project of the Queen's marriage with her cousin Prince Albert.

We have seen that the *first impression* was produced by the Prince, on the occasion of his visit to London

in 1836, though nothing had been openly expressed by the principal parties concerned. Still that visit had put the idea of such a marriage into the mind of the public, and rumours to a like effect spread yet further during the Prince's sojourn at Brussels in 1836–37. It was, however, only in February and March 1838, when Prince Albert again visited his uncle Leopold at Brussels, that the latter talked the matter over with him unreservedly and at length.

The King wrote to Stockmar[1] in March as follows:

'I have had a long conversation with Albert, and have put the whole case honestly and kindly before him. He looks at the question from its most elevated and honourable point of view; he considers that troubles are inseparable from all human positions, and that therefore, if one must be subject to plagues and annoyances, it is better to be so for some great or worthy object than for trifles and miseries. I have told him that his great youth would make it necessary to postpone the marriage for a few years. I found him very sensible on all these points. But one thing he observed with truth. "I am ready," he said, "to submit to this delay, if I have only some certain assurance to go

[1] See 'Early Years.' p. 217.

upon. But if after waiting, perhaps, for three years I should find that the Queen no longer desired the marriage, it would place me in a very ridiculous position, and would to a certain extent ruin all the prospects of my future life. . . ." If I am not much mistaken in Albert,' the King proceeds further on, 'he possesses all the qualities required to fit him completely for the position he will occupy in England. His understanding is sound, his apprehension clear and rapid, and his feelings correct. He has great powers of observation, and possesses much prudence, without anything about him that can be called cold or morose.'

The King had declared that a delay of the marriage was necessary, because the Queen herself had asked for it. She had told her uncle that she could not for the next three or four years think of marriage, and had since her accession to the throne discontinued her correspondence with her cousin.

The Queen's confession on the subject[1] is most touching, alike truly royal and truly womanly; it commands unfeigned respect, and we cannot resist inserting it here:

'Nor can the Queen now think without indignation against herself, of her wish to keep the Prince waiting

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 220.

for probably three or four years, at the risk of ruining all his prospects for life, until she might feel inclined to marry.

'The only excuse the Queen can make for herself is in the fact, that the sudden change from the secluded life at Kensington to the independence of her position as Queen Regnant, at the age of eighteen, put all ideas of marriage out of her mind, which she now most bitterly repents. A worse school for a young girl, or one more detrimental to all natural feelings and affections, cannot well be imagined, than the position of a Queen at eighteen, without experience and without a husband to guide and support her.'

In April the two Coburg Princes paid a second visit to Brussels, and on April 12 the King writes to Stockmar: 'Albert is much improved; he looks so much more manly. . . . If he waits till he is in his twenty-first, twenty-second, or twenty-third year, it will be impossible for him to begin any new career, and his whole life would be *marred*, if the Queen should change her mind.'

In the meantime the Queen, as she herself declares in the 'Early Years,' had never altogether given up the idea of the marriage. Even before Stockmar left England, she had expressed this to him, and had instructed him in writing to accompany the Prince, on

a journey taken with a view to the completion of his education. The plan for such a journey had already been made on the occasion of the first visit to Brussels in March.

In December the Prince started for Italy, accompanied by Stockmar. At Florence, where they spent some time, they were joined by Captain, now Major-General, Seymour. Florence, Rome, Naples, afforded abundant food to the Prince's feeling for nature and art; and the journey laid the foundation of a friendship with Stockmar, which lasted as long as life, and grew more and more intimate, as years rolled on. A letter is printed at p. 207 of the 'Early Years' in which the Prince gives his own confessions of his Italian journey: 'On the whole my life was very pleasant. The society of a man so highly distinguished as Baron Stockmar was most precious and valuable to me. I was also accompanied by a young and very amiable Englishman, a Mr. Seymour, with whom I have become very intimate. Above all, that complete harmony which is so necessary for any enjoyment of life always existed amongst us.'

In May 1839 Stockmar quitted the Prince at Milan and preceded him to Coburg.

We have before us a fragment in which Stockmar gives the results of his observations of the Prince

during the journey. We will give the following extract therefrom, not as tallying with the picture which we obtain of the Prince later on, after he had during twenty years developed his inner nature under favourable circumstances; but rather for the contrary reason, as affording a remarkable instance of the manner, in which a given individuality may in the course of time become modified:

'The Prince,' writes Stockmar, 'bears a striking resemblance to his late mother, and, differences apart, is in many respects both in body and mind cast in her mould. He has the same intellectual quickness and adroitness, the same cleverness, the same desire to appear good-natured and amiable to others, and the same talent for fulfilling this desire, the same love of "espiègleries" and of treating things and men from the comical side, the same way of not occupying himself long with the same subject.'

'His constitution cannot be said to be a strong one, though I believe that by careful attention to diet, he could easily strengthen it and give it stamina. After exerting himself, he often for a short time appears pale and exhausted. He dislikes violent exertion, and both morally and physically tries to save himself. Full of the best intentions and noblest designs, he often fails in carrying them into practice.'

'His judgment is on many subjects beyond his years, but, up to the present time, he has not shown the least possible interest in *political* matters. Even the most important events of this kind never, even at the time of their taking place, induce him to read a newspaper. He has, as it is, a perfect horror of all foreign newspapers, and says that the only readable and necessary paper is the "Augsburger Allgemeine," and even this he does not read through. In the matter of "les belles manières" there is much to desire. This deficiency must be principally laid to the account of his having in his earliest years been deprived of the intercourse and supervision of a mother, and of any cultivated woman. He will always have more success with men than with women. He is too little "empressé" with the latter, too indifferent and too reserved.'

Thus far the fragment, to which we will add the following observations:

If we take a certain moral and intellectual disposition, the possibility exists of developing it in a variety of ways, but always within definite limits. What a man will ultimately turn out, is not irrevocably fixed by his original disposition; but, on the other hand, the individual cannot be fashioned into any given shape, and he can only develope himself within the possibilities laid down by his individual nature. The real outcome

of every man's development is the product of two factors, viz. of the forces, some strong, some weak, within him, and of external circumstances, whether favourable or unfavourable. No one would have guessed from the features described in the above fragment, what sort of a man the Prince ultimately proved to be. Yet, sketched as they were by a competent observer, and one favourably situated for the purpose of observation, those features were undoubtedly correctly drawn at the time. If we compare Stockmar's description in a few principal points, with the character of the Prince, as it showed itself in later years, we shall be struck by the great modifications which his nature underwent in the course of time.

What Stockmar says respecting his bodily constitution received a sad confirmation in the Prince's death. His nervous system was never strong; he was all his life liable to exhaustion, as the result of exertion, and in such cases he was wont to look pale and weak.

The way in which the Prince was wont to présent himself in his intercourse with others, did not alter much in his riper years, from what it was as a youth in 1839. In his intercourse with persons with whom he was intimate, the cheerfulness and amiability of his youth never ceased, as well as a childlike pleasure in

jokes, and a rare talent in producing or representing what was comical. In larger circles, on the other hand, he appeared formal, measured, and reserved, and, as many thought, cold and stiff. But this he was equally as a young man. He writes to his early friend, Prince Löwenstein, from Florence on February 25, 1839, as follows:[1] 'I have lately thrown myself entirely into the whirl of society. I have danced, dined, supped, paid compliments, have been introduced to people and had people introduced to me; have spoken French and English; exhausted all remarks about the weather; have played the amiable, and, in short, have made "bonne mine à mauvais jeu." You know my *passion* for such things.'

The 'bonne mine' which a man makes to what appears to him to be a 'mauvais jeu,' is certainly not the most advantageous expression which his features can adopt. The youth of twenty showed little disposition to devote himself to female society, and the Queen remarks at p. 209 of the 'Early Years' that this 'as an occupation he particularly disliked.'

In other respects the Prince's character underwent later the greatest and most remarkable changes.

Stockmar speaks of the aversion of the youth to

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 197.

earnest intellectual exertion, and of the weakness he displayed in the execution of good intentions lightly taken up. Yet this youth grew up to be a man, indefatigable in intense intellectual activity, of the strictest faithfulness, conscientiousness, firmness, and consistency in the measured, regular, and laborious fulfilment of duty in every direction.

The young Prince of 1839 who found so little to his taste in politics that he could hardly be induced to read any newspaper, not to say any but the 'Augsburg Gazette,' became the helper—and what a helper—of his wife, in the government of one of the greatest empires, living from early morning till late at night in the midst of 'la grande politique.' And though he never (to mention one small matter of detail) liked newspaper reading, it yet became later one of the regular portions of his day's work, conscientiously to read through the political portions of the 'Times' with its monster columns.

These great and important changes in the Prince's nature are doubtless, in part, to be attributed to the natural growth and maturing of his powers, from which arose a greater strength to act up to his principles of duty. But there was yet another reason. There are natures, in which certain talents and capacities are so strongly developed, that they drive the individual, as

it were by storm, to use them and apply them upon the corresponding subjects. There are others whose talents and powers develope and grow by contact with corresponding objects, either brought near by favourable circumstances, or even forced upon them. The Prince evidently belonged to the latter category, and Stockmar soon had occasion to see him in England, growing to be an altogether different man from what, according to the above letter, he had found him in Italy.

After the Prince's return from his Italian journey, it was determined that he and his brother should go in the autumn to England, in order that his fate and the Queen's should be decided.

Since Stockmar's departure from England affairs there had not progressed satisfactorily; the evils before adverted to had increased. There was wanting in the Council and 'entourage' of the Queen a discreet and firm adviser. This was especially proved on two important occasions: the so-called Bed-Chamber Question at the period of the retirement of the Melbourne Ministry, and the melancholy incident connected with Lady Flora Hastings. In regard to both these affairs, Stockmar laid a considerable portion of the blame on the carelessness and weakness of Lord Melbourne.

It may be as well to give a short account of these two events.

In May 1839 the Melbourne Ministry found itself, upon an important question connected with the constitution of Jamaica, in so small a majority, that they considered themselves obliged to tender their resignation. The Queen sent for Sir Robert Peel, and declared to him with the greatest frankness in her first conversation, that she exceedingly regretted parting with her present Ministers, with whom she was perfectly satisfied. This introduction did not, however, prevent the continuation of the negotiation; and the construction of the new Ministry met with no difficulty, until Sir Robert insisted upon the necessity of a change of persons in the posts of the ladies of the Bed-Chamber, which the Whig Ministers had entirely filled up with their nearest relations. The Queen at once expressed herself verbally against any change of the kind, and then consulted Lord Melbourne. The latter advised with his colleagues, and the result was, that the old Ministry undertook the responsibility for the following note addressed by the Queen to Sir Robert Peel:

'The Queen, having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the ladies of the Bed-Chamber, cannot consent to adopt a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and which is repugnant to her feelings.'

Sir Robert Peel thereupon immediately declined to form a Cabinet, and the former Ministers returned to power.

People are now agreed [1] that Sir Robert Peel was, from the constitutional point of view, in the right; and as matters then stood, if we consider the exclusive manner in which the court was composed, and the exclusive tendencies of the Queen in a Whig sense, it is clear that he had every reason to hold fast by the view he had taken. Stockmar thought it very blameworthy, that Lord Melbourne had not prevented the youthful sovereign from showing her dislike to the Tories in so conspicuous a manner, and hindering the creation of a Tory Ministry upon grounds untenable constitutionally.

'The late events in England,' he writes, 'distress me. How could they let the Queen make such mistakes, to the injury of the monarchy? Melbourne ought to have allowed the nation to make the practical experiment, whether a Tory cabinet can really hold its own. In his place, I should have been glad to have seen Wellington and Peel for some time at the helm. For if they succeeded, the proof would

[1] See May, 'Const. Hist.,' vol. i. p. 132. Todd, 'Parliamentary Government,' vol. i. pp. 130, 190.

have been afforded, that Melbourne's Cabinet could, under no circumstances, have remained in power much longer; and if they did not succeed, the respect due to the Queen remained intact; and Melbourne would, in the eyes of the world, have been justified, nay, called upon, to return to office with a modified Cabinet.'

Whilst this political episode, which naturally did not increase the Queen's popularity amongst the Tories, was causing some excitement in England, another complication was preparing at court, which, later on in the summer and autumn, led to a real catastrophe.

Lady Flora Hastings, a lady-in-waiting of the Duchess of Kent, who was staying with the latter at the Queen's court, gave signs, in the winter of 1839, of a change in her appearance, which called forth disadvantageous comments touching her honour. The matter was brought to the knowledge of the Queen by the ladies of her court. A medical enquiry was instituted, which proved the entire groundlessness of the suspicions. The Hastings family, which belonged to the Tories, was in the highest degree offended. They looked upon what had taken place, as the result of a diabolical plot, set upon foot by the Whig ladies of the Bed-chamber against Lady

Flora, and demanded the punishment of the guilty persons. Such a punishment was, of course, impossible, inasmuch as what had taken place at court, though the result of over-hastiness, had been done in perfect good faith. When matters were at this pass, Lady Flora died of a deep-rooted disease, which was only discovered at the post-mortem examination. Her death roused to the highest pitch, the rage of the Tories against the Whigs, and their animosity against the Queen. These events increased the desire on the part of the public, that the Queen should soon trust herself to the protection and aid of a husband.

Under these circumstances the two Coburg Princes arrived at Windsor on October 10. Prince Albert, as the 'Early Years' inform us, was resolved to declare to the Queen, that if she did not then make up her mind, he would be unable any longer to await her decision. Already, on October 15, however, the betrothal took place. On October 16, the Prince announces the event to Stockmar in the following letter:[1]

'I write to you on one of the happiest days of my life, to give you the most welcome news possible;' and having then described what took place, he proceeds:

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 226.

'Victoria is so good and kind to me that I am often at a loss to believe that such affection should be shown to me. I know the great interest you take in my happiness, and therefore pour out my heart to you. More, or more seriously, I cannot write to you, for that, at this moment I am too bewildered, for

> Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen,
> Es schwelgt das Herz in Seligkeit.'

Stockmar wrote to the Prince to express his hearty good wishes, and at the same time earnestly advised and counselled him, in regard to the cardinal points necessary for the establishment of his happiness, and for the proper fulfilment of his appointed task.

The Prince answered from Windsor on November 6:[1] 'Dear Baron Stockmar, a thousand thousand thanks for your dear kind letter. I thought you would surely take much interest in an event which is so important for me, and which you yourself prepared.

'Your prophecy is fulfilled. The event has come upon us by surprise, sooner than we could have expected; and I now doubly regret that, yielding to the wishes of relatives and the advice of those who de-

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 235.

termined the disposal of my time, I have lost the last summer, which I might have employed in many useful preparations.

'I have laid to heart your friendly and kind-hearted advice as to the true foundation on which my future happiness must rest, and it agrees entirely with the principles of action which I had already privately formed for myself. A character, which shall win the respect, the love, and the confidence of the Queen and of the nation, must be the foundation of my position. This character gives security for the disposition which prompts the actions; and even should mistakes occur, they will be more easily pardoned on account of that personal character: while even the most noble and beautiful undertakings fail in procuring support to a man who is not capable of inspiring that confidence.

'If, therefore, I prove a "noble" Prince, in the true sense of the word, as you call upon me to be, wise and prudent conduct will become easier to me, and its results more rich in blessings. I will not let my courage fail. With firm resolution and true zeal on my part, I cannot fail to continue "noble, manly, and princely" in all things.

'In what I may do, good advice is the first thing necessary; and that you can give better than anyone,

if you can only make up your mind to sacrifice your time to me for the first year of my life here. I have still much to say to you, but must conclude, as the courier cannot wait longer. I hope, however, to discuss the subject more fully with you, by word of mouth, at Wiesbaden.

'Hoping that I shall there find you well and hearty, I remain,

'Yours truly,

'ALBERT.

'Windsor, November 6, 1839.

'P.S. I must add, what I forgot to tell my uncle in my letter, that after we leave this, we must organise a chain of couriers between Coburg, Wiesbaden, Brussels, and London, that our letters may go quickly, often, and safely. Please talk to my uncle about this.'

Uncle Leopold had been since October at Wiesbaden, taking the waters. He had sent for Stockmar, who remained with him during the whole of the month of November. The Princes arrived there on their return from England, on the 20th of that month. All the circumstances and difficulties connected with Prince Albert's future position in England, were submitted to a detailed and exhaustive discussion. The Prince had, as we have seen, obtained on the spot, a

sufficient insight into affairs to make him keenly desirous of having the advice and countenance of Stockmar in entering upon his new career, and it was decided that the latter should go to England some time before the wedding, which was fixed for February.

A letter of Stockmar's to Baroness Lehzen, dated December 15, 1839, shows what he, at that time, thought of the Prince and of his career:

'It is with real pleasure that I assure you, that the more I know the Prince the more I love and respect him. His intellect is so sound and clear, his heart so unspoilt, so childlike, so turned towards all that is good and true, that he only requires two external elements to make a most distinguished prince. The first is, time and opportunity properly to know and understand men and the world; the second is, intercourse with experienced, cultivated, and upright Englishmen, through whom he might get to know and understand the nation and its constitution. . . . As regards his future relation to the Queen, I confidently hope that they will learn heartily to love, trust, and respect each other, so as to secure each other's happiness. The Queen, such as I have learnt to know her, possesses a keen and quick apprehension, is straightforward, singularly pure-hearted, and free from all vanity and pretension. She will, therefore,

do ample justice both to the head and heart of the Prince; and if this is the case, and the Prince is truly loved and appreciated at his full value by the Queen, I shall consider his future happiness secure; especially if in addition he knows how to win the respect of the nation. Not but that he will have to face storms and disagreeables of many kinds, as every man has to do, more especially those placed in high positions. But if he has the love of the Queen, and the respect of the nation, I will guarantee that after the storm he will always sail into a safe harbour. I therefore entirely agree with you that the best thing is to leave him to his own right judgment, sound feeling, and religious sense.'

CHAPTER XIX.

MARRIAGE OF THE QUEEN. POSITION OF THE PRINCE.

1840.

Stockmar's arrival in England, January—Conclusion of the marriage contract—How the marriage was regarded in England—Appointment of a private secretary to the Prince (Mr. Anson)—Parliamentary debates on the religion of Prince Albert—The question of his annuity—Settlement of the rank of the Prince—Arrival of the Prince—First impression produced on the public—Attitude and sentiments of the Prince—His influence on the Court—Question of the Regency—Stockmar's departure from England, August—Testimonial which he gives to himself.

STOCKMAR arrived in England on January 9. His first official employment was to negotiate the treaty of marriage with Lord Palmerston in the capacity of the Prince's Plenipotentiary.

'I called on Lord Palmerston in Carlton Terrace,' he writes, 'and found him very absent and overworked, yet he congratulated me in the heartiest manner; and assured me that of all the marriages possible this was the one which he most approved of. We then made the necessary arrangements, as to the manner in which our business should be transacted.'

During the course of the following weeks Stockmar had an opportunity of observing how the proposed marriage was received in England. We will give a summary of what he says on the subject in the various letters he wrote during the months of January and February.

'The ultra-Tories are filled with prejudices against the Prince, in which I can clearly trace the influence of Ernest Augustus of Hanover. They give out that he is a Radical and an infidel, and say that George of Cambridge, or a Prince of Orange, ought to have been the Consort of the Queen. On the whole, however, the mere determination of the Queen to marry, and the satisfaction thereby given to what was a very universal desire, (for the idea that the King of Hanover and his line might succeed to the throne was very distasteful to the people,) has raised the Queen's popularity, and will for a while lend some little strength to the very weak Ministry. The public is tolerably indifferent as to the person of the bridegroom; but I hear it generally complained that he is too young.'

The irritation of the Tories against the Queen and the Ministry, the indifference of the Whigs to the person of the Consort Elect, the bitter feeling which animated each party against the other, the unconcern

of both as to the true interests of the Crown, the violence of the Radicals intensified by a financial crisis and a stagnation of commerce and industry, the carelessness and want of tact which characterised the Whig Ministry; all these considerations augured ill of the manner in which the questions bearing upon the future position of the Queen's husband would be treated.

A matter, in itself of little consequence, afforded the Prince an opportunity, shortly before his marriage, of showing the principles by which he intended to be guided, in taking up a position apart from political parties.

The question had reference to the appointment of a Private Secretary, and Keeper of the Privy Purse to the Prince. Lord Melbourne proposed his former private secretary, Mr. Anson, for the post. The Prince saw in the proposal, an intention on the part of the Whigs to establish their influence over him. Not wishing, at first starting, to have himself thus ostentatiously decorated with the Whig colours, and determined to adhere to his principle of not identifying himself with a party, he energetically opposed this appointment. The matter had, however, gone too far to be cancelled, and so, on Stockmar's advice, the Prince gave way; and found, as the 'Early Years,'

p. 323, truly says, in Mr. Anson, a faithful, devoted, and honest servant, wholly above all party intrigues.

The Queen opened Parliament on January 16th in person, and announced from the throne her intended marriage. In the debate on the address, the Tories gave proofs of their irritation, and of the spirit of chicanery which animated them. They complained, that in the notification of the marriage, Prince Albert was not specially designated as a *Protestant* prince. The Government had doubtless omitted this, as a delicate attention to their Catholic supporters in Ireland. Of course there was no intention on the part of the speakers of expressing a doubt as to the Prince being a Protestant; but it would have been a satisfaction to the country to have this distinctly affirmed; and a proof that England still retained the character of a Protestant State. The Duke of Wellington proposed as an amendment in the House of Lords, that the word 'Protestant' should be added to 'Prince' in the address, and carried the amendment against the Government. A few days later, Stockmar received a note from Lord Palmerston, which proved that from some quarter or another, either out of malice or from ignorance, doubts had been raised as to the religion of the Prince. Lord Palmerston writes 'in great haste' 'Can you tell me whether Prince Albert belongs to

any Protestant sect, the tenets of which could prevent him from partaking of the Lord's Supper, according to the rites of the Church of England?' Thereupon Stockmar answered in a very decided tone, that, in the first place, the Prince did not belong to any sect, and, secondly, that no material difference existed between the celebration of the Lord's Supper according to the rites of the German Protestant Church, and those of the Anglican Church. 'This,' writes Stockmar, 'put an end to these scruples; but God knows, with the fanaticism at present existing, what incredible absurdities might not have been let loose, had not Lord Palmerston been enabled, by my decided answer, at once to make the evil-minded harmless.'

Of far greater importance were two other questions which had to be settled before the Prince's arrival in England, and on the settlement of which the circumstances above adverted to, exercised a very unfavourable influence. They were those of the Prince's annuity and of the rank he was to enjoy.

With characteristic carelessness Lord Melbourne had, in November 1839, declared to the Queen[1] that the Cabinet did not apprehend any sort of difficulty in passing these measures.

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[1] See 'Early Years,' p. 251.

When they came to be discussed in Parliament, however, the matter assumed a very different aspect.

The Government applied for an annuity of 50,000*l.* for the Prince, and in doing so rested their case on the analogous position of a Queen Consort, wife of a reigning king. Caroline, wife of George II., Charlotte, wife of George III., Adelaide, wife of William IV., had each had an annuity of 50,000*l.* As we have seen in an earlier chapter, the annuity of Prince Leopold, as consort of an heiress *presumptive* to the throne, had been fixed at the same sum. Nevertheless, the amount demanded was opposed in Parliament, both by Tories and Radicals. Mr. Hume, the Radical member, moved an amendment reducing the vote to 21,000*l.*, urging his usual arguments for economy, viz. the heaviness of taxation, and the miserable condition of the people. The ultra-Tory, Colonel Sibthorp, proposed 30,000*l.*

The Ministry showed itself careless and devoid of judgment. Already, some days before the debate began, Lord Melbourne declared to the Queen,[1] that a defeat was to be apprehended. 'When I heard this,' writes Stockmar, 'I went to him, and asked him whether he did not consider that the

[1] See 'Early Years,' p. 277.

wisest thing to do, would be to come to an understanding with the Opposition, and whether he would not authorise me to enter into indirect negotiations on the subject with Wellington and Peel. He answered: "No; my relations to the Duke have of late undergone a change. We are no longer on the footing we were, when you were last here."'

It was Stockmar's fixed maxim that all questions of this kind, affecting the interests of the Crown, were to be held as above political party-feeling, and should in consequence be treated confidentially with the heads of the Opposition; a maxim which was afterwards adhered to by the Prince with the best results.

'I did not venture,' continues Stockmar, 'at that time, to enter into such a negotiation on my own responsibility; but I have often asked myself since, whether matters would not have gone better, if I had on my own account broached the question with Sir Robert Peel.'

In the debates in the House of Commons of the 22nd, 24th, and 27th, the attitude of the Ministers was damaging. Lord John Russell, in his statement on the 24th, fell into the great mistake of saying that the Prince's household would cost about 8,000*l.* a year, which afforded the Opposition the natural

opportunity of asking what use there was for the remaining 42,000*l.* In the next place, Lord John allowed himself to be carried away into the domain of personalities. He gave it to be understood that the Opposition, by combating the proposal of the Government, showed a want of respect and loyalty to the Crown. This reproach increased the bitterness of the Tories, all the more so, that it was partly deserved, and, by rendering the debate more passionate, removed it yet further from the influence of rational considerations. The amendment of Colonel Sibthorp (reduction to 30,000*l.*) was carried by 262 against 158. Sir Robert Peel and his more immediate followers had spoken and voted for it, so that even with that great statesman, party-feeling and passion got the better of higher political considerations. It is true that Sir Robert Peel said in his speech, that in the event of the Queen's marriage resulting in a numerous family, he would be ready to vote a larger sum to the Prince, but not until the latter had given pledges of his intention to reside permanently in the country, and of his attachment to it. In this very opening up of a future contingency, however, an insulting distrust of the Prince, and an unfriendly feeling towards the Queen, was most strongly shown, as regarded the present.

'No party,' writes Stockmar, 'appears to me at the present moment to care about the injury inflicted upon the Crown, as such. The case is a new one, and probably of greater importance for the future, than for the present. The result has been brought about by an union between the Tories and the Radicals. For some days the possibility of such a thing was talked of. Many of my friends seemed to think it an impossibility that the Tories should be capable of such folly, but I warned them not to expect wisdom as the result of party anger. Many circumstances, it is true, have combined to render the present moment a very inopportune one for such a grant. The Tories are in the highest degree embittered, and their defeat in the late elections, by which their hopes of coming into office have been diminished, has probably conduced to intensify this bitterness. Only a feeling of this kind can have rendered them indifferent to the evident danger, that such a vote would give personal offence to the Queen, and thereby increase her ill-humour against them. This is why I say, that this vote may possibly bear its worst fruits later on.'

In the course of the next few days Stockmar convinced himself, more and more, that the blow which had been struck at the Prince, was not merely to be

laid to the account of the Opposition, but was, in good part, owing to the indifference, if not to the bad faith, of the Ministers and their adherents. He learnt that a number of the supporters of the Government, had, at the time of the division, been seen walking about in the streets, and he soon afterwards obtained a direct confirmation, by the following admission of Lord Melbourne. On the 6th he writes:

'As I was leaving the Palace I met Melbourne on the staircase. He took me aside, and used the following remarkable and true words, strongly characteristic of his great impartiality: "The Prince will doubtless be very much irritated against the Tories. But it is not the Tories alone, whom the Prince has to thank for the curtailment of his appanage. It is the Tories, the Radicals, and *a good many of our own people*." I pressed his hand in approbation of his remarkable frankness. I said, "There's an honest man! I hope you will yourself say this to the Prince."'

It was Stockmar's greatest wish that this event should not embitter or render the Prince hostile to the Tories, and so place him in a false and party attitude. On the other hand, on the part of blind Whig followers, this was just the very thing speculated upon; as hinted at in the 'Early Years,' p. 277,

where it is said that the ministerial party may, in the attitude they assumed, have been influenced by the hope, that the Prince immediately on his arrival might be prejudiced against the Tories, and thus the breach between them and the Queen would have been widened.

The Prince was already on his way to England. He received the news of the vote respecting his annuity at Aix-la-Chapelle.

Stockmar wrote to him at Brussels in order, by giving him a truthful and impartial account of the real causes of the mishap that had befallen him, to induce him to take a correct and dispassionate view of the transaction. Fortunately the Prince's natural temperament came to the assistance of Stockmar's endeavours. His correct judgment and lightheartedness, as well as his thorough good nature, rendered innoxious the poison which those circumstances contained for him. He afterwards said to Stockmar, that what pained him most in the matter, was the restriction that would thereby be imposed upon him in his endeavours to do good, and to assist poor artists and savants, which he had much looked forward to doing.

Such a nature as his was fully able to attain to that degree of independence in regard to men and things, which was a necessary condition of the Prince's

gaining his proper position in his new and difficult career.

The point next in importance which required to be previously settled, was the determination of the rank which the Prince should have.

The most desirable, and at the same time the most natural thing to have done, would have been to give the Prince unconditionally precedence next after the Queen, and therefore before all the remaining members of the Royal Family; not only before all the descendants of George III., but before his own future children. Yet in spite of the anxious wishes of the Queen, and the repeated attempts to do so, it proved impossible to effect this.

In November 1839 the betrothed in their conversations do not appear to have apprehended any difficulties on the subject.[1]

Soon after, the Ministry took the matter in hand, and the intention was to introduce a clause into the Naturalisation Bill, which should give the Prince precedence immediately after the Queen.

The uncles of the Queen, the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, were first sounded on the subject, and after some hesitation gave their consent. The King

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 233.

of Hanover not only refused, but urged the Tories to agitate against the measure, and worked upon the Duke of Cambridge to withdraw his consent. The Prince's Bill of Naturalisation came on, on the 27th of January in the Upper House. It was, according to the Government proposal, to contain the following declaration: 'That the Prince, for his life, was to take precedence in rank after Her Majesty, in Parliament and elsewhere, as Her Majesty may think fit and proper, any law to the contrary, notwithstanding.' The Whig Ministry in the meantime had, with its usual carelessness, in bringing in the bill, made some blunder of form; which gave the Tories an opportunity of putting impediments in the way of a rapid passing of the bill. They had forgotten to state in the title of the bill, that the same had reference not merely to the naturalisation, but likewise to the rank of the Prince. On the motion of the Duke of Wellington, therefore, the debate was adjourned, because the House had had no knowledge of so important an addition. As regards the matter itself, the objection was made to the Government proposal, and that by Lord Brougham, that, according to the proposed bill, as it was to have unconditional validity during the entire lifetime of the Prince, the latter would have unconditional precedence over every eldest son and heir-apparent of a sovereign,

and therefore, in the event of the Queen dying without offspring, over the eldest Prince of the King who would be called to the succession, i.e., Ernest Augustus of Hanover. The Government thereupon modified their proposal, to the effect that the Queen should have the power to give the Prince precedence after any heir-apparent. This concession, however, did not satisfy the Opposition, who demanded the limitation of this precedence to the lifetime of the Queen.

In this conjuncture of affairs Stockmar writes:

'I had heard from the Tories, that the clause respecting the precedence was certain to be thrown out in the House of Lords. None of my acquaintances whom I could have sent to Wellington or Peel were in town. In my great anxiety I sent my trusted friend Mrs. W. to the Duke of Wellington, to represent to him how deeply this question touched the Queen. He received her, listened to her, scolded a little, and gave an uncertain answer, so that this move produced no result. The Queen had taken the defeat respecting the annuity with great composure, but laid all the greater weight upon the success of the question respecting precedence. When Lord Melbourne informed her of the probability of his being defeated in the Upper House, and therefore proposed that the matter should be dropped, she could not bring herself

to follow this advice. I now went to Melbourne and found him doubtful and irresolute. I said to him, "For God's sake withdraw your bill and do not allow yourself to be beaten a second time. This would have the very worst effect possible." He answered, "That I fully believe; but the Queen lays the greatest possible stress upon the matter." I replied, "Be only firm and prove to Her Majesty the evil results that would follow from a second discomfiture." He answered, "Yes, but what is to happen next?" "Settle the matter of precedence," I said, "by an order in Council, as the Regent did in the case of Prince Leopold." I went home and copied out for Melbourne the words which the Regent had used in 1826 to settle the rank of Prince Leopold, and sent them to him.'

The matter was settled according to this idea. The Government dropped the clause respecting precedence, so that the bill was passed as a bill of naturalisation; and a few months later[1] the precedence of the Prince was determined in virtue of the royal prerogative, by a patent, to the effect that the Queen accorded to him precedence next to herself, on all occasions and in all meetings, except where otherwise provided for by Act

[1] 'Early Years,' pp. 263, 325.

of Parliament. The restrictive clause had reference to a law of Henry VIII., determining the precedence in the House of Lords and in Council, for naturally a Royal Ordinance could not invalidate the distinct precepts of the law.

On the 6th of February the Prince arrived in England. It was not without anxiety that Stockmar looked forward to the future. He had recognised in Prince Albert eminent intellectual gifts, a pure will, goodness, guilelessness, a well-meaning disposition, a spirit of fairness and justice, and a talent for adapting himself to circumstances. But the question was, whether he possessed sufficient energy of mind and character, to meet the difficulties of his position, and whether so young and so inexperienced a Prince could answer the great expectations which the nation had formed of him; whether he would be able to display the strength, and perseverance, and endurance which were necessary, amidst difficulties of every kind, to overcome what was yet deficient in him, and to develope properly the great and admirable qualities which formed the foundation of his character.

The first impression produced by the Prince in England was a favourable one. 'The Prince gives satisfaction,' writes Stockmar on February 15; and on the 20th he adds, 'The impartial are well pleased with

him; he has been better received than was to be expected. He behaves in his difficult position very well.'

During the next few months Stockmar frequently complains of the old faults—dislike to intellectual labour and political apathy. He never slackens in his endeavours to arouse and strengthen in the Prince, ideal aspirations and the sense of duty. Sometimes the Prince seems to be losing courage. But his pure and noble will, little by little, gains the upper hand, and triumphs over all external and internal impediments.

One of the first beneficial results by which the influence of the Prince made itself felt, was that the Court took up a less unamiable attitude towards the Tories. Lord Melbourne himself, who, as we have seen, was personally free from all party fanaticism, met the Prince and Stockmar here half way. 'Melbourne said to me,' writes Stockmar on February 20, 'that he had already expressed to the Prince his opinion, that the Court ought to use the present opportunity to treat all parties in a general spirit of amnesty, and especially the Tories;' and in the 'Early Years,' p. 328, we read that Lord Melbourne repeated this sentiment to the Queen in the words, 'You should now hold out the olive-branch a little.'

Towards the middle of the year, the prospect that the Prince's position would become more assured, was afforded by the hope of an heir. Measures had therefore to be taken to meet the possibility of the Queen's death, leaving behind her an heir to the throne, which would necessitate the appointment of a Regency; and to secure the nomination of the Prince to the Regency.

The following passages out of Stockmar's letters refer to this contingency:

'June 18, 1840.

'As soon as the doctors can announce to the Ministers the state of the Queen, with a probability bordering on certainty, the latter must lay before Parliament a Regency Bill to meet the possibility of the Queen dying, and leaving a minor as her heir. My plan would be to act upon a full understanding with the Opposition. I don't know what the Queen and the Ministry will think of this plan. But when I call to mind the course matters took in regard to the annuity, and the question of the Prince's precedence, I feel almost inclined to act on my own responsibility. There can be but two alternatives: either that the Prince should be named Regent *without* or *with* a Council. It appears to me, after considering the

arguments on which the Regency Bill of the Duchess of Kent was founded, that the best course will be that Albert should be appointed sole Regent.

'I shall endeavour to work in this sense on the Tories and the Opposition, but I don't hide from myself that there will be all manner of objections, such as his youth, his want of acquaintance with the country and its institutions, &c., and that the Dukes of Cumberland, Cambridge, and Sussex, not wishing to be passed over, will endeavour to put a spoke in the wheel, the former by means of the ultra-Tories, the latter by means of the ultra-Liberals.'

'June 26, 1840.

'I have communicated twice with Sir Robert Peel respecting the Regency Bill, through Lord Liverpool. At first I only informed him that the matter would be brought on at the end of the session, and expressed the opinion that unanimity of all parties on the question, was of the greatest possible consequence, and that therefore it was considered very desirable that his opinion on the subject, whatever it should chance to be, should be known. His reply was, as usual, very guarded, but very friendly. He knew exactly what had happened at the time the Regency Bill for the Duchess of Kent had been prepared, as he

was Minister at the time. It was, however, necessary for him, before giving an opinion, to consult with a very few only of his supporters. After this, Peel heard that the Ministers did not intend to bring forward the bill during this session, but proposed to convoke Parliament for the purpose in October. On my mentioning the subject to Lord Melbourne, he replied, that so unpractical a notion had never come into his head. With this answer Lord Liverpool again went to Peel. The latter was friendly, but very reserved. He had as yet only spoken on the subject with the Duke of Wellington, and could therefore only state his personal opinion, which was in no way to be taken as that of his party. Prince Albert was the natural guardian of his child. The only question therefore was whether there should be a Council of Regency or not. Speaking generally, he could not see the practical utility of a Council of Regency, still less could he see the particular use of including in it, for instance, the Duke of Sussex. Such councils usually led to dissensions and intrigues. All that he had heard of the Prince, and all that he had seen of him, spoke in his favour. In his opinion the Ministers should bring in the bill as soon as possible.'

'Melbourne hereupon expressed a wish to see me. I told him what I had heard from Peel, through Lord

Liverpool. He said Peel's view was his own also. But the measure was one beset with difficulties. The bill provided for the next eighteen years.[1] It was of the greatest importance that there should be unanimity in both Houses, respecting the measure to be passed, but he doubted whether this unanimity would be attainable. I perceived from this, that he must have been talking the matter over with some of his colleagues, and that they must have inspired him with doubts which he had not previously entertained. I thereupon took the opportunity of proving to him that there would be danger in delaying the measure, and that there were more reasons for bringing the matter on at once, than for putting it off. He agreed to this, and promised me to take no step in the matter, without having first spoken to the Duke of Wellington.'

'June 28.

'Peel came to-day quite unexpectedly to Lord Liverpool, and said to him in a friendly and straightforward manner, with a view to its being communicated to the Prince, that there was an intrigue on foot among the Radicals, for the purpose of setting up the Duke of Sussex as Co-Regent. His advice to

[1] In the event of the Queen's death immediately after the birth of an heir, the minority would have lasted eighteen years.

the Prince was to remain perfectly quiet and passive. He, Peel, would take care that no harm should happen to the Prince from that side.'

'June 29.

'Melbourne told me with reference to the question of the Regency, that after his conversation with me, he had gone straight to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke at once asked him, "What are you going to do? You must do something." He had answered, that, after carefully weighing the matter, he had decided against anything in the shape of a Council of Regency. The idea of dividing the Executive power amongst a number of persons, was against the spirit of the English Constitution. His opinion therefore was, that the father of the child should be constituted sole Regent. To this the Duke replied, "This is my view of the case. You probably wish that I should talk with my friends, for instance with Sir Robert Peel, upon the subject. That shall be done, and we shall then meet again to discuss what further steps should be taken."'

'July 8.

'The Duke of Sussex, with whom Anson dined, took the latter after dinner into a corner, and asked him what he knew about the intention of the Minis-

ters, with reference to the Regency Bill. Anson replied, "Nothing but what is said by the public on the subject." Hereupon the Duke burst forth into bitter lamentations, upon the absurdity of this measure; it was perfectly useless, and could not fail to agitate the Queen, and thereby probably exercise the most pernicious influence on her health. Moreover, the Ministers ran no sort of risk by omitting to provide for a Regency. Because, if circumstances should force them to act upon their own responsibility, they could always, later on, get their acts covered by a bill of indemnity. He knew, however, very well who was the moving spring in the matter (meaning Stockmar). This perfectly explains why Melbourne, in one of his last conversations with me, showed himself so undecided, and, as counter-arguments to my proposals, used word for word the arguments of the Duke. The Duke had, as I was afterwards told, communicated his views through a third person to Lord Melbourne, (probably through Lord John Russell), and the Minister had drawn the inference, that the choice of Prince Albert would cause great opposition. The bill will be brought in, in the course of a day or two, and we shall then see, whether Peel and his party keep their word.'

'July 11.

'On Monday the Lord Chancellor will deliver the message respecting the Regency, to the House of Lords.

'We must make up our minds, that the friends of the Duke of Sussex will bring forward a few absurdities, or perhaps come out with some disagreeable truths; but, unless all the assurances which have been made to me—and I have had some of the strongest kind—turn out to be simple lies, I do not foresee anything untoward. The short but very friendly article in to-day's "Times" proves that I still have some ascendant over the obstinate nature of my old friend Barnes (the then editor).'

'July 20.

'The Duke of Sussex, and the Duchess of Gloucester, are determined to give us a great deal of trouble about the Regency Bill.'

A few days later he writes:

'The Regency Bill will be read a second time in the House of Lords. Till now, no opposition has been made, except by the Duke of Sussex. The latter, as usual, has acted very irrationally. He and the whole Hanoverian family, he says, have been deeply

offended. As regarded himself, he only cared about the principle, and not about persons, and this was his reason for protesting. He knew that he was doing himself harm, but he must do his duty. This causes pain to the good-hearted Premier, and he has already sent five or six ambassadors to the Duke, in the hope of mollifying him, but as yet without success. Whether the opposition of the Duke will find an echo in the House of Commons, I cannot tell. But even if there are a few foolish speeches, the bill itself is, thanks to the promises of Peel, perfectly safe.'

The bill met with no opposition in either House, excepting that of the Duke of Sussex, and Stockmar could well be satisfied with the result of his exertions. The Prince fully recognised the services he had rendered. He wrote, on July 24, to his father, the Duke of Coburg:[1]

'There has been much trouble to carry the matter through, for all sorts of intrigues were at work, and had not Stockmar gained the Opposition for the Ministers, it might well have ended as did the 50,000*l.*'

Stockmar thought as soon as the Regency Bill was settled, that it was time for him to return home. 'With this act,' he writes on July 11, 'my business here

[1] 'Early Years,' p. 352.

is for the present, and perhaps for ever, at an end. How much or how little I have been of use, it is not for me to determine. But I can at least say, that I have not committed a single blunder, and this is always a satisfaction to a man in my years.'

He left on August 3, but not without a pressing invitation on the part of the Queen and the Prince, to return in November, when the Queen expected her confinement.

CHAPTER XX.

FROM THE YEARS 1841–1846.

Arrival of Stockmar in England, November 1840—Birth of the Princess Royal—The Nursery—Return to Coburg, April 1841—Again in England, September 1841—Change of Ministry—Previous Negotiations with Sir Robert Peel in May 1841—Lord Melbourne on the change of Ministry—Relations between Stockmar and Sir Robert Peel—Letter of Lord Liverpool of October 7, 1841—Stockmar's estimate of Peel—The Oriental complication, 1840–1841—Question of the Customs' Union between Belgium and France—The Orangist Military Conspiracy (Van der Meeren and Vandersmissen), Autumn 1841—The relations of France—Her plans in regard to Belgium —Louis Philippe's attitude—Stockmar's reflections on the relations between Holland and Belgium—Domestic life of the Royal Family of England—The Prince Consort—Birth of the Prince of Wales —Invitation to the King of Prussia to the Christening—Intrigues against the King's journey—Saxon objections to his being sponsor—Arrival of the King, January 1842—Alexander von Humboldt, Count Anton Stolberg—Conversation of Stockmar with the King—Stockmar's impression of King Frederick William IV. — Count Stolberg, Alexander von Humboldt—General impression respecting the King's visit—Change in the Prussian Legation in London—Bülow — Bunsen—Stockmar recommends Bülow for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs — Letter of Count Stolberg on the visit to England—Stockmar's relations to Stolberg and Bunsen—Education of the royal children — Memorandum of Stockmar thereon — State of the Royal Family—Visits of illustrious personages to the English Court, 1844—Visit of the Emperor Nicholas—The question as to diplomatic relations being established between Russia and Belgium, discussed with him—Conversations of the Emperor with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, respecting Belgium, France,

and the East—Stockmar's remarks on these conversations, and on the Emperor's visit to England — The Russian Memorandum of 1844—Stockmar's Memorandum on the reform of the Royal Household—From Autumn 1844 till May 1846—Stockmar in Germany—Letter to Bunsen, beginning of 1846, on the state of Germany—Death of Bülow.

IN November, Stockmar returned to London. On the 21st, a princess was born, Victoria, the present Crown Princess of Prussia. The Prince Consort enjoyed the presence and advice of Stockmar, and availed himself of his medical experience on behalf of mother and child. The organisation and superintendence of the children's department, in the early period of the marriage, occupied a considerable portion of Stockmar's time. In one of his letters he writes, 'The nursery gives me more trouble than the government of a kingdom would do.'

We may here mention that the little Princess, now a woman blooming with health and life, was for many years a sickly child, whose rearing long seemed a matter of doubt.

During his stay in London, Stockmar carefully watched the working of the Oriental Question, and also occupied himself a great deal with the incipient question of the Spanish Marriages.

As no business of immediate importance detained him, he returned to Coburg in April 1841. But the summons from the English Court becoming, during

the course of the summer, more and more pressing, he was back in London as early as September.

He found a very different state of things from that which he had left. On August 30, the Melbourne Ministry had fallen, and the Tories, with Sir Robert Peel at their head, were established in the Government and at Court. The events of 1839 had left behind them, in the minds of the parties concerned, sufficient traces, to render the change of Government more than usually difficult. 'Why are you not here?' wrote the Prince to Stockmar. By the Prince's wise and careful management, however, the change was eventually effected in a very satisfactory manner.

For months previously, the fall of the Whig Ministry had been foreseen. As early as April 12, 1840, Stockmar wrote: 'I have just had a long conversation with Lord Melbourne. He seems to think that his Ministry is exposed to all sorts of chances and accidents, and he nowhere sees a guarantee for its stability.' And on July 8 he writes: 'I am inclined to think that the Ministry will hardly hold out much longer, or that it can drag on beyond next session. It is too weak, and all confidence in it, even that of its own party, is on the wane. Brougham says wittily enough, "I know what Melbourne wants; he wants to remain in till he can get a majority in both houses."

Lord Grey is beside himself, and says there never was such a Ministry as this before; that they have literally nobody for them, except the Queen and the Radicals; everyone else is against them: he has himself told me that, under certain circumstances, he would find himself obliged to go over to the Opposition. Accordingly, it will require but the smallest impulse from without, and such is never wanting, and the Ministry will fall to pieces like a house gutted by fire.'

This precarious state of the Cabinet induced the Prince, as early as May 1841, to enter, with the knowledge and approval of Lord Melbourne, into secret negotiations with Sir Robert Peel, for the purpose of smoothing away any difficulties which might eventually arise on the occasion of a change of Ministry, and preventing the recurrence of the obstacles which had been met with in 1839. The negotiation was carried on through the instrumentality of Mr. Anson, the Prince's private secretary, and Peel on this occasion showed a fairness and delicacy, an uprightness, conscientiousness, and circumspection, such as are not likely to be met with again in similar circumstances. The result was an arrangement to the effect that, if the Melbourne Cabinet left office, the Queen would cause those ladies, whose removal on

account of their relationship to the actual Ministers, the Tories considered as indispensable, (viz. the Duchesses of Bedford and Sutherland, and Lady Normanby), to resign of their own accord; so that the principle which in the year 1839 had formed the subject of debate between the Queen and Sir Robert Peel, should be left untouched.

The effect of this arrangement was not indeed annihilated, but it was delayed by the Whig Ministry, after a vote of want of confidence had been passed upon it by the House of Commons in June, resolving to have recourse to a dissolution of Parliament. The change of Ministry was thereby put off till August, when the Whigs, in spite of the misuse [1] which they made of the Queen's name at the elections, succumbed to a new vote of want of confidence, and found themselves forced to resign. The new Ministry then entered office without the slightest difficulty. Soon after his arrival in London, Stockmar called upon Lord Melbourne. 'He assured me,' says Stockmar in a letter of September 12, 'that he was perfectly satisfied, with the way in which the change of Ministry had been effected. He praised the Prince, who had

[1] The Whig cries at the elections were as follows: 'The Queen and the Country against monopoly.' 'The Queen and cheap bread.'

behaved throughout with the utmost moderation and caution, and also Peel, who had acted as a thorough gentleman, and who had said to him, 'It is different now from what it was two years ago; I am now strong enough to be magnanimous.'

Closer relations between Stockmar and the head of the new Ministry were established, through the medium of Lord Liverpool, with whom the former had for many years been on terms of intimacy.[1]

Lord Liverpool writes on October 7, 1841 :

'Fife House, October 7, 1841.

'My dear Baron,—Peel sent for me this morning, to speak to me about the contents of his letter to me. After some general conversation on matters respecting the royal household, he said that he had had much satisfaction in his intercourse lately with Her Majesty, and specifically yesterday; and he asked me whether I had seen Her Majesty or the Prince yesterday, and whether they were satisfied with him? I told him that, except in public, I had not seen Her Majesty, and, except for a moment in your room, I had not seen the Prince: but that as he spoke to me on this matter, I must take the opportunity of

[1] Lord Liverpool, d. 1851, brother of the Premier, who died in 1828; a moderate Tory, and a very amiable, intelligent, and thoroughly honourable and trustworthy man.

saying a word to him about *you*, from whom I had learnt yesterday, that both the Queen and the Prince were extremely well pleased with him. That I had known you very long, but that our great intimacy began when King Leopold sent you over, just previous to the Queen's accession; that we had acted together on that occasion, and that our mutual esteem and intimacy had increased; that your position was a very peculiar one, and that you might be truly said to be a species of second parent to the Queen and the Prince; that your only object was their welfare, and your only ambition to be of service to them; that in this sense you had communicated with Melbourne, and that I wished that, in this sense, you should communicate with him, Peel. He said that he saw the matter exactly as I did; that he wished to communicate with you, and felt the greatest anxiety to meet the wishes of the Queen and Prince in all matters within his power, and as far as consistent with his known and avowed political principles; that in all matters respecting the household and their private feelings, the smallest hint sufficed to guide him, as he would not give way to any party-feeling or job, which should in any way militate against Her Majesty's or His Royal Highness's comfort; that he wished particularly it should be known that he never

had a thought of riding *roughshod* over Her Majesty's wishes; that if you would come to him at any time, and be candid and explicit with him, you might depend upon his frankness and discretion; that, above all, if you said anything to him and expressed a wish that it might not be communicated, even to the Duke of Wellington (that was his expression), that he wished me to assure you, that your wishes should be strictly attended to. Pray give me a line to say that you do not disapprove of what I have done. We had a great deal more conversation, but with this I will not now load my letter.

'Being ever sincerely yours,

'LIVERPOOL.'

On October 14 Stockmar writes: 'I place great reliance on Peel's capacity as a statesman. Want of confidence in himself and in others, appears to me his weak point. I should consider him, therefore, better fitted for quiet than for stormy times; anyhow he will, in a far higher degree than his predecessor, be Prime Minister in the true sense of the word; and, placing the confidence I do in his honesty, I hope that the Royal prerogative will be far better maintained by him than by Melbourne. I know for certain, however, that Peel does not yet believe that he possesses the

confidence of the Queen, to the extent which he wishes and requires. The Prince, on the other hand, he considers as his friend. It is remarkable that the Prince should have had this opportunity of heaping coals of fire on the head of Peel, who reduced the Prince's income by 20,000*l.*, and did his best to deprive him of his rank. The Court has become more respectable since the new arrivals.'

During the next few months Stockmar became, personally, more intimately acquainted, both with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen. In a letter of December 2, he writes:

'A man who has been often taken in, becomes naturally distrustful. I shall therefore, for the present, say no more, than that the commencement of my relations with Peel and Aberdeen is apparently very satisfactory. As yet I have met with nothing but openness, willingness, coincidence of views, and the promise of fulfilling what has been undertaken.'

In the correspondence of this year, Oriental and Spanish affairs take up a large space, and Belgian affairs came in for a considerable share of Stockmar's attention.

The details of the Oriental complication of 1840–41 are well known. We shall therefore content ourselves with extracting a few passages, in which Stock-

mar states his views respecting the principal points of difference.

On November 21, 1840, he writes as follows:

'The four allies have adhered, till now, to their original view of the conflict, and have remained true to the principles flowing out of it, and to the diplomatic treatment of the question grounded on those principles. They look upon the essence of the difference which has arisen between them and France, as consisting not so much in that which has occurred or may occur in the *East* between Sultan and Pacha, as in the principles and pretensions put forward by France, in the face of Europe, and which appear full of danger to all States alike. They say: France has taken advantage of the Oriental question to proclaim maxims in favour of the Pacha, which, were they once accepted by the rest of Europe, would put an end to all international law, and therefore endanger the existence of every State. It is on account of these subversive principles that we must oppose France, and not really on account of the claims which she puts forward on behalf of the Pacha in Syria. Did these premises not lead to general consequences, dangerous to all Europe, we should not very much care whether the Sultan or the Pacha had a bit more or a bit less of Syria. We all require peace, and all lay a great

value upon a good understanding with France, and we are quite ready to prove this in practice, as soon as France will place herself on the basis of international law and equity. But a principle such as that which France announces, viz. that the Pacha is to have Egypt and Syria, because France considers him necessary to the present political equilibrium, we never can admit, even if war should be the result. By such an admission England would give France the right to say: "O'Connell being at the head of a successful rising against Great Britain, must be recognised, because we consider him as a necessary element of the European equilibrium." '

In August 1841, Stockmar writes:

'Even if France were in the right, it was worth while to show her that her dictatorship would not be tolerated, and that Europe is not afraid of M. Thiers, when he takes to playing the part of Napoleon. That war would be a great misfortune is true; but, on the other hand, mere negotiations indefinitely prolonged, and in which the bad side of human nature, in the natural course of things, overpowers the good side, may bring about a condition of affairs so indescribably rotten, that even war would be preferable, as the only means of preventing terrible diseases. The complaint of France, that she was insulted by the

Quadruple Alliance[1] is a mere pretext, and shows how very little real reason she has to complain. It is true that Palmerston is flippant and obstinate at the same time, but the mistakes which an Englishman can commit can never, like those of a Frenchman and a Thiers, reach into the infinite. Of the two, the latter is much the most dangerous. I hope that Louis Philippe, who is after all an able man, will at length succeed in mastering this *brouillon*.'

In the Spanish marriages question, the overbearing claims of France showed themselves from the very first. 'They write to me,' says Stockmar in a letter of November 11, 1841, 'that the husband of Queen Isabella must be a Bourbon, because the French choose to have it so, and that in this respect also Guizot's hand will be forced. The incurable French! it is always the old story; we choose to have this, and it must be. Then come the impossibilities, and they get violent like children, are treated like children, and at last when they have spent their rage and fury, they are themselves glad that their wishes have come to nothing.'

In the years 1840-42, the European position of Belgium was put in question, in consequence of the

[1] The Treaty of July 15, 1840, between England, Russia, Austria, and Prussia on one side, and the Porte on the other.

negotiations entered into by that kingdom with France, respecting a customs' union. The substance of these negotiations is given by Guizot in his 'Memoirs,'[1] with which may be compared the notices in Juste[2] and Le Hon.[3] The French and Belgian accounts of this matter are so far differently shaded, that the French and Belgians each take great pains to prove that the proposal for the customs' union originated on the other side. It is, however, not to be denied, that the first impulse came from Belgium, whose Government was desirous of opening new markets to the industry of the country. It is also true that the idea did not at all times, and at the hands of all influential persons in France, meet with a like warm reception. As early as 1836 the Belgian Minister in Paris, Le Hon, had been instructed to take soundings on the question. In the year 1840, under the Thiers Ministry, which seems to have been very eager on the subject, regular negotiations were begun. They were brought to a standstill by the Oriental complication, and were then again taken up in July 1841 under Guizot. King Louis Philippe appears to have embraced the project very warmly, Guizot more coolly. We may

[1] Vol. vi. p. 276 et seq.
[2] 'Memoirs of Lebeau,' p. 142 et seq.
[3] Pages 142, 183, 202.

anticipate what follows by saying, that in the year 1842 the plan was ultimately given up, because it was violently opposed by French industry, from fear of Belgian competition, and because England and Prussia considered the union irreconcilable with the independence and neutrality of Belgium; whilst Russia and Austria, though holding themselves aloof, clearly showed that they would eventually adhere to any formal steps taken by England and Prussia.

Respecting this project of customs' union, Stockmar expresses himself in August 1841 as follows:

'I see great political dangers in the project, for the nationality and independence of Belgium. The readiness with which France will meet the wishes of Belgium, ought to give the Belgian statesmen a measure of the greatness of the danger which they will run. In my opinion, France will under all circumstances show herself ready to accede to the proposal. Should the measure appear detrimental to the material interests of France, the Government will nevertheless push it forward, because the eventual political advantages are too tempting and too important. Clever and ingenious as the French are in such things, they will know how to satisfy the extravagant demands of Belgian industry, by sham concessions. Supposing after a time that the Belgian

public opens its eyes, the net will remain thrown over them, and can be used as a political tow-rope.'

'Should the interests of Belgium which are benefited by the union, be only of a partial kind, extending to only some of the provinces, as for instance to the Walloon districts, the customs' union with France might, in the course of a short time, become the means of disintegrating the unity and nationality of Belgium. The greater vivacity of the Walloons, the laxness of their Catholicity, will combine with material interests to make them thoroughly French, and ready at the slightest opportunity to separate themselves from the other provinces, and to incorporate themselves with France. What would then be left to the remaining forsaken provinces but to unite with Holland? Maybe that in this way the division of Belgium, which has been so often mentioned, might be brought about in a more safe and quiet manner than by the force of arms.'

'If, however, I am, on the other hand, to assume that the material interests of the *whole* of Belgium would be promoted by the customs' union, I must foresee that, from the moment of its realisation, the political position of Belgium becomes an entirely altered one. As matters now stand, I consider it possible for Belgium to act as a neutral and indepen-

dent State. It even appears to me possible, that she should assume an attitude, which should so far impose respect on France herself, as to force the latter, whether she liked it or not, to treat Belgium as something independent. But, after a union, by which the general interests of Belgium had been amalgamated with similar French interests, she might possibly continue to figure as a State, so far as the name goes, but in reality she would be little more than a French province.'

'The following might be a reply to what I have just said: "These are mere words, which do not in any way meet the difficulty, of stilling the hunger of the classes who live by commerce and industry." To this I answer: Granted; but, in that case, before the union be determined upon, it must be clearly and thoroughly established, that the Belgians will obtain in return for the loss of their nationality, real advantages, and that these are of sufficient importance to feed the hungry, and not mere baits wherewith to catch foolish fishes. King and Ministry must equip themselves in armour of proof against the attacks of those who hunger after *profits*. Governments, as such, can do very little of a positive kind for commerce and industry. To endeavour to satisfy the thirst of

gain, is an idle attempt on the part of a Government, and every endeavour to do so, only creates new demands urged with greater violence. I expect most for the world of commerce and industry from the times we live in, which cannot fail shortly to bring certain principles to maturity. The truth that all commerce should be free, will be recognised, and the altered views of nations, will render it possible for Governments to give reality and substance to the commercial treaties concluded by them. Belgium will exist even without the customs' union with France, and without the union her commerce will daily increase, for this lies in the nature of things.'

In a letter of October 14, Stockmar adverts once more to this same subject:

'Time alone can bring roses, time alone can make Belgium's cc mmercial classes more intelligent, more capable, more adroit. Time alone can moderate France's mania for prohibition. Markets such as the Belgians dream of for their over-production, do not exist, and if they did, they would in a few years cease to be of any use. Not only men, but whole nations are subject to "fixed ideas." That Belgium has now to bear so considerable a portion of the interest of the Dutch debt, is owing to results arising from the

mistakes of the year 1838.[1] But even were Belgium to pay nothing of this interest, it would be a supreme absurdity to spend the millions thus saved, on the artificial development of Belgian industry, and thus stimulate over-production by state assistance. King William I. sinned enough in this respect, and Belgium is atoning for his sins in Ghent and Liège. It is and remains a mistake to attempt, in our days, to create industry by artificial means. The only result is to call into existence the vampire of over-population.'

An event of the year 1841 afforded a fresh opportunity of testing the vitality of the Belgian State, viz. the Orangist military conspiracy, which broke out in the autumn, under the auspices of Generals Van der Meeren and Vandersmissen.

As far back as August, emissaries had been sent by the Belgian Orangists to the Royal Family of Holland, to announce that the greatest discontent reigned in Belgium, that in all classes deep regret prevailed at the separation from Holland, and that there would be the utmost readiness on the part of the population, to throw itself into the arms of the House of Orange,

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[1] Stockmar seems to have been of opinion that in 1838 Belgium might have obtained even better terms on the question of the debt, if she had shown herself less obstinate and warlike, as to the question of the territory to be given up to Holland.

if an opportunity, such, for instance, as a movement in France, offered itself. These reports appear to have produced a certain effect on the thoughtless and harebrained King of Holland. In his quiet and sober moments, he admitted that Belgium was lost to him, but then on other occasions his fancy would run away with him, and the intensity of the desire to win back the lost possessions, made him believe in the possibility of doing so. He imagined that though his father had not been liked in Belgium, and had left no sympathies there, he himself had been personally beloved, and he took all kinds of means to keep up these supposed sympathies or to kindle them afresh. Amongst these were, for instance, his advances to the Roman Catholics, the favour shown to the Belgian officers in his army, changes made in the Dutch uniform, so as to assimilate it more nearly to the Belgian, &c.

Such a character as this was easily set in flames by the Orangist news from Belgium; moreover an attempt at restoration in Belgium must have appeared all the more desirable to him, because his position in Holland was thoroughly bad, and because he had lost all respect and confidence there to such an extent, that the people would have recalled the old king, had he not married a Roman Catholic. To all this must be added, that France had for a long while past been

intriguing with Holland, and had recently been coquetting with her, in a manner which had fairly turned the poor King's head, and intoxicated him with the wildest hopes.

It was under these circumstances, that the abortive attempt at restoration was made in the autumn of 1841, respecting which we will give the following passages out of Stockmar's correspondence.

'The intrigues of the French Minister at the Hague, and the ostensible demonstrations of the French Cabinet towards the Dutch, formed the starting point for the Dutch, Belgian, and French complication. The sudden friendship of Louis Philippe and Guizot dazed the King of Holland, and excited in him and his familiars notions of a restoration. France in the year 1830 hardly accepted in good faith, the creation of an independent kingdom of Belgium. Unable to hinder what others were doing, she consented to what they did, with the *arrière pensée* that it would after all prove but a scaffolding, which would soon collapse. She had at the time to make real sacrifices, and could not therefore but be indignant, when somewhat later, Belgium became more and more anti-French, talked of her German and Flemish elements, of joining the Germanic Confederation, and generally in the eyes of the French behaved ungratefully and rudely. To this must be added that ever since 1834, the financial

difficulties of Holland had impressed on the Ministers the notion, probably in itself a wrong one, that Holland, as it was then constituted, could not continue to exist, and that it must either go back to its former state under the Stadtholder, or at least attain a partial restoration in Belgium. After what had happened in Europe in 1830–34, the Dutch Ministers must naturally have considered that the greatest difficulty in regard to the recovery of Belgium, either in whole or in part, would be met in the opposition of France. It was thus they took up the idea of coming to an understanding with that country, an idea which could not fail to be well received there, seeing the firm determination which existed, of drawing the utmost possible profit from any future crisis, through which Belgium might pass.

Aberdeen seems to consider it beyond a doubt that ever since 1840 it has been Thiers' plan to divide Belgium with Holland. Boislecomte was the soul of these intrigues, and goes on with them to this day in conjunction with Heeckeren. That, for a long while to come, France and Holland should cherish such desires of partition, I consider perfectly natural; whether they succeed, is another question. Various European Cabinets have for centuries together had certain standing cravings, without ever being able to

satisfy them. If France and Holland wish to devour Belgium, this alone ought to create sympathies on the part of the other great Powers for the latter, for they can never hope to see a permanent basis of peace attained by a new cession of Belgian provinces to France.'

In what relation Louis Philippe stood, in Stockmar's opinion, to these ideas, we see in a letter of December 2, 1841:

'In judging Louis Philippe, I take into account his position as King, and also his character as a Frenchman.'

'The conditions of peace of 1814–15 were dictated by conquerors filled with a sense of their superiority. No wonder that they contained traces of arrogance, and that the whole French nation should continue to desire to shake off these trammels and to revenge themselves. Owing to this circumstance and to the revolution of 1830, Louis Philippe as King is placed in a cross fire; on the one side *Europe* dictates to him peace, as the only means of maintaining himself and his dynasty, on the other side *France* dictates to him war, as the only means of shaking off intolerable treaties. Louis Philippe places more confidence than he ought in his own wisdom and adroitness. Talleyrand has said to him, "You must not make war; but you must avail yourself of any crisis, in order, without

war, to modify the treaties and adapt them to the interests of France. You have to fear cannon shots, but there is no necessity whatever to fear the *appearance* of war, or warlike complications, which, little by little and by mere protocols, may be smoothed down again."

'This is the whole secret of Louis Philippe's policy, and this policy he will follow in every European crisis, in regard to Belgium. All his Ministers without exception desire to obtain Belgium, and believe that under a favourable constellation their wishes will be realised. Louis Philippe knows of these wishes quite as well as I do. For his own person he follows in the Belgian question the policy of *laissez faire*. "Let the constellation my Ministers are always talking about arrive, and I shall then have to determine what my conduct must be." Should the conjuncture really come about, he would reason as follows: "I am between two fires. On the one hand I am a father, on the other I am King of the French. God preserve me from ever failing in my paternal duties; but here the duties of the King take precedence. The morality of politics is different from that of private life. I must sacrifice the welfare of my daughter and of my grandchildren to that of France. Let it be, I will make this enormous sacrifice. I will dethrone my daughter, and her children, on the condition, however, that they

shall be properly provided for; one who, like myself, knows what are the sufferings and burthens of king-craft, may well take comfort from the question, whether my daughter and my grandchildren will not be happier in private life than seated on a throne."'

The attempt at an Orangist restoration, gave rise on the part of Stockmar, to the reflections which follow, respecting the relations between Holland and Belgium. He writes on October 20:

'The idea of reunion is as old as the repeal of the union between Holland and Belgium. The cause of this is, that a half truth lies at the root of this idea, which suffices to satisfy the one-sided. The idea of reunion was principally nourished in England long before Pitt, by him, and after him. It was a standing feature of English policy, and became thereby a fixed idea, and a coloured glass through which other objects were viewed.'

'An unexampled combination of warlike events brought about a political possibility, which the English Cabinet seized, in order, in its omnipotence in 1814, to dictate the reunion of the two countries. This reunion, however, as I observed above, rested on a half truth only. The great schoolmaster of mankind, Time, afforded Europe and Belgium an opportunity of discovering the other side of the truth,

and the ripening fruits of the errors committed by the Vienna politicians in 1814 and 1815, together with the political incapacity of the King of Holland, added what was still wanting.'

'A revolution resulting from a general dissatisfaction, mainly arising from moral grievances, is commenced and carried through by a few firebrands. The few lead, the people follow like sheep. The tumult of passion which lasts until the revolutionary madness has spent itself, prevents everyone from thinking of himself and of the injury done to innumerable material interests, which must be sacrificed to the chase after moral reforms. At last the bleating of the shepherds and of the herd ceases. People once more take to thinking of themselves, and consider what are the material advantages which they have jeopardised. The temperature sinks in exact proportion to the height to which it had previously risen, and this sinking of the temperature disposes the people not only to excuse the former state of things, which they have themselves destroyed, but even makes them wish to have it back again. This is the march of all revolutions, and the cooling process described above is now going on in Belgium.'

'That the present King of Holland should wish to get back Belgium is natural enough. Not only does

everyone wish to recover what he has once possessed, but the good man firmly believes that he has, since the Revolution, discovered the true secret by which the two countries may be reunited, and which his father had never known. But "L'Estimable," as the King of Prussia calls him, is mistaken, like his papa. At the most he knows three-fourths of a matter, of which his father only knew half. William II. thinks the two countries could be permanently maintained under *one* king, if they received separate administrations. This is nearer the truth, but is not yet the whole truth; and if something rational and therefore durable is to be established, it will be necessary to go one step further, and seek the satisfaction of the political requirements of the Dutch and the Belgians, in a perfect harmony with certain great natural laws.'

'Nations like individuals consist of two parts, body and soul. There can be no doubt that, as regards their bodies, Holland and Belgium are pretty nearly, though not quite, similar; there would, at all events, on this score, be no reason for their not continuing to live together in political matrimony. The question is very different, when we come to their respective souls, which are very dissimilar; and, inasmuch as it is the soul which holds empire over the body, it is not the

difference of body, but the difference of the soul, which constitutes the true "mésalliance" in the nation as well as in the individual. One side of the problem therefore consists in this, that the two countries are physically attracted towards each other; the other side in this, that they are intellectually and morally repelled by each other. If this be admitted, the question to be answered is: Is this a state of things that must necessarily last? I think for my part, that I must answer in the affirmative. My reasons are the following: It is not necessary to enter into the original causes of those differences, which found their expression in the different ways of life, different habits, occupations, every-day customs of each country. These contrasts, dating from the earliest times, could not in the course of time but be continuously enlarged, by the never-ceasing action of those great moral influences which more than anything else tend to call into life the specific existences to which we give the name of "national character." The firm hold with which the Reformation established itself in Holland, the struggle, first for religious and then for political liberty, which arose out of it, in 1568, the independence at last so gloriously attained, the political power maintained for so long a period, the political and mercantile influence exercised over

Europe; all this tended each year, more and more, to make the Dutchman more specifically Dutch. And so likewise in the contrary direction: the uninterrupted influence of the Roman Catholic religion in the fulness of its unity and strength, the state of political tutelage, in which from the day of her separation, Belgium remained under the different Governments to which she was subjected, the supremacy of the French over the Flemish language, all tended to stamp the Belgian type more and more upon the Belgian.'

'That after the long continuance of these influences, the moral contrast originally impressed upon the two nations by Destiny will continue to exist, is what I firmly believe; and I consider the renewal of a union, like that which existed up to 1830, all the more impossible, that its essential feature consisted in the fact, that the majority was permanently subjected to a minority, which they disliked and considered disagreeable and unjust.'

'Holland and Belgium occupy an important position in the Europe of to-day, and may continue to do so for a long time to come; it therefore becomes the business of a politician to assign to each a proper and lasting position. My view of the matter is as follows:

'Holland and Belgium have certain physical requirements in common, whilst their moral ones are

absolutely distinct. Let each obtain his full rights. Let each be secured in the enjoyment of his moral individuality, by dynastic and political separation, but let them be treated in regard to their material wants, as one family. My notion would be to see them, perhaps for a long time to come, surrounded by a common customs' line, and this without damage done to their respective political independence, and without fear that thereby the means should be given to the King of Holland to annex Belgium.'

But while Stockmar thus followed the political affairs of the day with interest, his warmest sympathies were devoted to the private life of the Royal Family of England. He saw their domestic life in a prosperous state. 'The Prince,' he writes on October 12, 1841, 'improves morally and politically. I can say with truth that I love him like my son, and that because he deserves it.'

A fresh source of happiness was soon added to the many already possessed by the Queen and Prince.

On November 9, the wishes of the royal pair were crowned by the birth of a son, the Prince of Wales. The christening was fixed for January 25, 1842. The choice of the god-parents gave rise to much consideration, on account of the conflicting claims of the numerous relations. The King of Hanover was

excluded, and, as Stockmar writes, was 'furious' (*wüthend*), thereat. By Stockmar's advice, and at his instigation, and on purely political grounds, the King of Prussia was invited. The choice of this German allied sovereign, the most powerful Protestant potentate on the Continent, was thoroughly approved of, both by the former Ministers and by those then in power, and caused general satisfaction in the country. King Frederick William IV. highly appreciated the attention shown to him, and promised to accept the invitation.

'Already five years previously, as Crown Prince,' writes Stockmar, 'Frederick William expressed a wish to visit England again. He continued to cherish this wish and to talk of it; and when it was settled that he should be asked to be godfather, all the people in the country who knew him, predicted that he would certainly come. As usual, politicians attached an exaggerated importance to the matter. The King, who foresaw this, wrote to Metternich, and in a manner asked his advice. Metternich answered evasively, and the King determined finally, as Maltzan[1] says, on his advice, not to trouble himself about the political intrigues which people got up

[1] Count Maltzan, Prussian Minister of Foreign Affair, obit 1843.

against the journey. It is certain that the Russians, Austrians, and even the French, in the person of Bresson,[1] all manœuvred against it. A court party, which believed the King would use the opportunity afforded him by his journey, to pursue his favourite idea of anglicanising the Prussian Church, in conjunction with Bunsen and the Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted these intrigues. When the King's determination to go was known, Bresson begged that he would at least go through France, and give the Royal Family a rendezvous; but this was declined.'

The sponsorship of the King of Prussia had also met with many objections on the part of some members of the Coburg family, owing to the Saxon feelings of that house. Stockmar writes to deprecate these objections:

'That Prussia has become great at the expense of Saxony, was rather the fault of the latter than of the former. It appears to me hardly possible that the mere sponsorship of the King of Prussia can afford a fresh lever for the total destruction of Saxony. Hence I have never been uneasy in regard to the political consequences, which that undertaking might have in reference to Saxony. On the other hand, I could not

[1] Then French Minister at Berlin.

overlook the advantages of the invitation, both politically, and in regard to family and private considerations. The King of Saxony was excluded by his religion.'

On January 23, the King of Prussia arrived in England. Stockmar found many occasions of rendering services to the King's suite, which led to a friendly intercourse with Alexander von Humboldt, and to repeated relations of a pleasant kind with Count Anton Stolberg, the Minister of the Royal House, both of whom accompanied His Majesty. He also had the opportunity of coming into personal contact with the King himself, a matter of great interest to him, owing to his high estimate of the mission with which he considered Frederick William was charged. He gives the following account of his conversation with the King:

'Count Stolberg told me that the King wished to talk to me respecting Belgium. A few days later Humboldt brought me to the King, who received me in the most friendly manner. He began by describing in detail, the duties he owed to Germany, and spoke for a long while coherently, well, and even eloquently. He was the natural representative of the honour and the well-being of Germany. As such, it was his duty to guard against the danger

which might threaten Germany from the side of Belgium. He looked upon the independence of Belgium as something highly precarious, which would hardly last more than two generations. The only danger for Belgium was France. His desire, therefore, was that Belgium might attach herself to Germany, and be admitted into the Germanic Confederation. By this means alone could he foresee that Belgium and her independence would be permanently secured. He did not underrate the difficulties which the present political constellation opposed to the realisation of these wishes, and he would in consequence not insist on the latter, for fear of creating fresh difficulties. All he cared for would be, to obtain a guarantee that King Leopold honestly shared this view, and accepted and held fast by a system leading to this result, the carrying out of which at some future time, under favourable circumstances, might be attempted. He hinted that he considered the King very much in the meshes of French politics, and of his French relations. It seemed to me that he judged correctly of the possible crisis which might result from the death of the present King of the French (Louis Philippe), in connection with the individuality of his successor (the Duke of Orleans). He said: "You can find now in France

neither religion nor morality; everything there is in a state of hopeless rottenness, as was the case with the Romans before the fall of the Empire, and I believe that France will collapse in the same way." Then returning to the question of Belgium, he said, that what he most desired was a guarantee of the uprightness of King Leopold's intentions, in regard to the relation of Belgium towards Germany, and that such a guarantee would principally determine his policy, in regard to the question of the Belgian fortresses. For that, at the breaking out of a war, these fortresses would at once, somehow or other, find their way into the hands of the French, was a matter on which neither he nor any of his generals had a doubt. His decision therefore, in this matter, would mainly depend upon the confidence which he could repose upon the political sentiments of King Leopold.'

'Stolberg had previously assured me that Metternich now exercised less influence and "ascendant" over the King than he had ever done. Some of the observations addressed to me by the King, appeared to run directly counter to this assertion, for he described Metternich as *the* great and wise statesman, to whom he was extraordinarily indebted, and whom he considered it his first duty to follow. I fancied,

however, that I could detect, that these words were spoken with the distinct intention of preventing me from laying too great a practical weight upon what he had said, with reference to his position in Germany.'

'During the entire course of the King's address, which lasted about an hour, I never interrupted him. When he appeared to have exhausted his materials, I confined myself to a few highly condensed observations, containing what, in reality, were objections. I found it natural that the Belgian Revolution should be held in abhorrence in Berlin. At a distance no fair and correct view could be taken, especially at first, of a hateful subject. This disfavour could not but be transferred to the person of King Leopold. The interruption of the former personal relations, which had been of so friendly a kind, between the Crown Prince of Prussia and King Leopold, was often the subject of the most painful emotion and reflections to the latter. From this consideration alone, and quite apart from any political result, I could not but wish that the King might be pleased, on the occasion which would soon present itself,[1] to be thoroughly open with King Leopold, and to

[1] The King of Prussia was on his journey back, to breakfast with the King of the Belgians at Laeken.

speak to him as a friend, and with the utmost degree of confidence. An unreserved conversation of this kind, would do more than anything else, to give His Majesty a correct view of the political sentiments of the King of the Belgians. In simple language I recalled to the King's recollection the political state of Europe in 1830, and reminded him of the debt which Europe owed to the decision taken by King Leopold, and of how ambiguous had been the treatment by the Northern Powers of a matter which, after all, was undertaken for the good of all; and how much they had themselves contributed, by what in my eyes appeared to be an erroneous policy, towards bringing about the very state of things in Belgium, respecting which the King had been complaining to me.'

'At this apostrophe the good-natured quiet expression of the King's face altered, and was replaced by an uneasy, anxious, and embarrassed air. I felt that the habits of a military absolutist court caused my words to appear to him as far too crude. I nevertheless went on quietly, and explained the reasons which did not allow me to look upon the existence of Belgium, as so absolutely uncertain as it appeared to the King. In the event of a general war Belgium had, in my opinion, as good a chance as

any other third-rate Power. The only policy for her, in a case of this kind, was to maintain her neutrality against everyone, and in the event of its being attacked on any side, to unite with whichever party considered it in its interest to defend Belgium and her neutrality. The success of such a policy would mainly depend on the certainty and rapidity of the decision taken, and on the energy with which the execution was carried out by King Leopold.

'The possibility that a man should speak of the future of Belgium, in any other tone than that of despair, appeared to astonish the King, but on the whole rather to please him. He smiled in a friendly but incredulous manner, and then spoke about the Belgian army, and the number of troops which the country could in case of need call out. He seemed to have doubts respecting the spirit and loyalty which they would exhibit, and expressed the opinion that the King showed himself too rarely to them, to kindle their enthusiasm, and to strengthen their loyalty. Generally speaking, the Belgians were rude, turbulent, changeable, and untrustworthy. I only observed in reply, that when they had been properly handled, they had always under their former governments proved good soldiers, and that 100,000 Belgians would, at all events, be a heavy weight thrown into the scale. I

concluded my speech by confessing it was my individual opinion, that the execution of His Majesty's wish that Belgium should join the German Confederation was, in the present political conjunction, simply impossible; inasmuch as the policy of north-eastern Europe since 1830 had done all in its power, to estrange Belgium from Prussia and Germany, and to drive her into the arms of France. The situation which had thus been called into life, and existed at present, could not be suddenly altered. A change in the future policy of Belgium would only be the result of King Leopold's obtaining the certainty, that he could place implicit reliance on the upright friendship of Prussia. In my opinion the incorporation of Belgium into a French customs' union, would result in making her as French, as her incorporation into the German customs' union, would make her German. The latter contingency was one which France, in her present position and temper, neither could nor would allow. I could not see where the guarantee desired by His Majesty, to the effect that in the event of a crisis Belgium should not exclusively throw herself into the arms of France, was to be found, except in the sound and fair political views and sentiments of King Leopold. But these views and sentiments, having their roots in the soil of Belgian politics, would

require that the King of Prussia should prove by facts, that he regarded the maintenance of the independence of Belgium, as a standing maxim of his own Prussian policy.'

'Stolberg had already twice announced the carriage, and so I was dismissed and the King drove to London.'

Stockmar describes the personal impression produced upon him by the King as follows:

'He appears to me to be a man of feeling, of the good type, full of the wish and the will to promote what is good and right, as far as he understands it, capable of enthusiasm, poetical, inclined to mysticism, yet less entangled in its meshes than the apostles of the sect who surround him. In his general culture, the King is essentially German. He has learnt a great deal, has occupied himself much with literature, and art, and has made architecture his favourite study. In society he is not very sure of himself, and wants readiness. The impression he produces appeals to the hearts of the persons with whom he comes into contact. One gets to like him, as a friendly well-meaning man, and thus he has left on everyone, high and low, a pleasant kindly recollection of his appearance and manner. He does not appear to have given anyone the idea that he possesses great political capacity or true statesmanship. He proved himself

very generous on the occasion of his departure, and on taking leave seemed much moved, like a man who had been thoroughly well satisfied with the reception which had been given him.'

Respecting the gentlemen in the King's suite we find the following observations in Stockmar's letters:

'I spoke once or twice with Stolberg on the political relations of Belgium. He seems to me to be an excellent kindly gentleman. Of the intellectual organisation which belongs to a political head, and which a careful observer can at once detect, I perceived nothing. There seemed to me to be a want of clearness about his ideas, and his powers of expressing himself appeared deficient.[1] Stolberg, the maréchal de la cour Meyerink, and General Brauchitsch, are all jealous of Humboldt, and endeavour to represent him as a vain talker, whom the King personally likes, though regarding him as little more than a living dictionary for every kind of knowledge, and never allowing him to exercise any political influence. For my part, the circle of ideas in which the old man lives, is too exclusively French and abstract; his political maxims are too much wanting in plastic form and substance. He is the personification of the conver-

[1] A letter from Stolberg which we give further on is a proof of this.

sation of the Parisian salon. His way of presenting things and persons to you, with the lights and shadows simultaneously thrown on, and the shadows treated à la Rembrandt, is charming, delightful, and Mephistophelian.'

After the King's departure, Stockmar thus describes the general impression left by the visit:

'The visit appears, on the whole, to have gone off very well. If the difficulties which here lie in the way of receiving any stranger properly, are kept in view, we may truly say that we behaved as well as it was possible for us to do, and that the result was a success. We have every reason to be fully satisfied with our guest, and with the whole of his suite, to be pleased with his visit, and to be grateful to him for not having allowed the troubles, difficulties, and expense inseparable from his undertaking, to frighten him from it. That his visit produced a useful effect upon our Queen, is not to be denied.'[1]

[1] It is worth while, for the sake of the thing, to compare with these impressions of Stockmar's, the sombre presentiments of evil with which the news of the King's English journey filled an old croaker like Varnhagen von Ense, living on insufficient rations of bad gossip. In his Diary (vol. i. pp. 381, 382) we find the following ejaculations:

'I can only look upon these things in a very sombre light, I consider them as exceedingly hurtful, they appear to me to contain the germs of terrible misfortune . . . . A most unfor-

In the course of the year 1841 a change began in the Prussian Legation in London, which was brought to a conclusion at the end of the year, shortly before the visit of the King of Prussia. Prussia had, since the year 1827, been represented in London by Heinrich von Bülow, with whom Stockmar had been, since the commencement of the Belgian question, in constant intercourse; and for whose insight, ability, and activity he had the greatest respect. Bülow had shown himself in the Belgian affair as a thoroughly enlightened statesman, free from all legitimist tendencies, and had often, even at the risk of endangering his position, moved in advance of the ambiguous and vacillating policy of his Court.

He was recalled in the summer of 1841, and sent to Frankfort, as Minister to the Diet.

The post in London, remained, for the present, vacant. It is true that, for a short period, Bunsen appeared there on a special mission, in connection with the Bishopric of Jerusalem. When this affair had been formally concluded, and Bunsen was already thinking of taking his departure, a message was sent

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tunate journey, full of gloom and pregnant with disaster, in spite of the lustre and jubilation with which it is accompanied . . . . May Heaven order things for the best—I cannot help myself, I am deeply moved, and can see no good in the journey.'

to the following purpose, apparently contained in a private letter from the King of Prussia to Queen Victoria: 'The King wishes to name a Minister entirely agreeable to the Queen, and therefore sends her three names to choose from.' The persons named were Count Dönhoff, in Munich, Count Arnim, in Paris, and thirdly, if we are rightly informed, written in smaller characters, the name of Bunsen. It so happened, that against the two first names certain objections, dating from former times, existed at the English Court. For Bunsen there was no particular preference; he was too little known, and his connection with the policy of Prussia, in the matter of the Bishopric of Jerusalem, a policy not very intelligible to the English,[1] made him, for the present, appear to the Ministers in a somewhat problematical light. On the other hand, it was known in what high favour he stood with the King, and there was the desire to do that which was agreeable to the latter; in so far, at least, as one had no reason to infer a disadvantage to oneself. The answer returned, therefore, was, that the Queen would gladly receive any Minister the King chose to send, but that Bunsen would be more es-

[1] Gladstone wrote to Bunsen: 'The novelty and (as yet) dimness of the scheme, has made it act powerfully on the nerves of my countrymen.'—*Bunsen's Life*, vol. i. p. 626.

pecially welcome. Hardly had Bunsen taken possession of his post, than the opportunity was afforded him of inaugurating his new position in the most brilliant manner, by the visit of the King. But he was obnoxious to many of his countrymen.

'The King's suite,' writes Stockmar, 'with the exception of Humboldt, detested Bunsen. Humboldt described him to me as a man full of talent, and highly honourable. He had always protected him, and had been the principal cause of rehabilitating him, and getting him his diplomatic post in Switzerland after his Roman failure.[1] I said to Humboldt, and also to Count Stolberg, that by Bülow's departure an agency was lost which was of great value to the policy of Prussia. Metternich ruled the policy of Prussia from Vienna, but as the opinion of the Austrian Embassy in London had considerable weight with Metternich, and as Bülow, though he did not rule the Austrian Embassy there, yet exercised considerable influence over it,[2] his departure would be a great loss of influence for Prussia. And this disadvantage would

[1] As is well known, Bunsen's negotiations with the Papal chair, respecting the question of mixed marriages, and the imprisonment of the Archbishop of Cologne, were crowned with ill-success; 1837 and 1838.

[2] At the time here referred to, the Austrian Ambassador in London was Prince Paul Esterhazy.

be greatly increased by the fact, that Bunsen was personally hated by Metternich, and also enjoyed the enmity of the Russians. I spoke with *connaissance de cause*, knowing accurately the animosity caused at Vienna and St. Petersburg, by Bunsen's action in the matter of the Bishopric of Jerusalem.'

In the meanwhile it became apparent that the post of Foreign Minister would soon become vacant at Berlin, in consequence of the dangerous illness of Count Maltzan, the actual Minister. In reference to this Stockmar writes:

'I openly expressed to Humboldt my opinion, that Bülow would be the best Minister of Foreign Affairs, and asked him[1] why he did not exert himself to bring about this appointment. Humboldt replied that there were many difficulties in the way; he was not without hopes, and it would, at all events, be useful if I expressed to the King, my honest opinion of Bülow's career during his twelve years' residence in England.'

For this, however, no opportunity presented itself. On the other hand, Stockmar had many opportunities of talking with Count Stolberg respecting Bülow.

'I praised him,' he writes, 'from conviction; but this praise found but little response on the part of

[1] Bülow was married to a daughter of Wilhelm von Humboldt's, and consequently a niece of Alexander von Humboldt.

Stolberg. He said Bülow at critical moments thought of himself first, and of the State afterwards. I hinted that if Maltzan did not recover, Bülow would be his best successor, but this proposal did not seem at all to his taste.'

Count Stolberg does not seem to have been as well inclined towards Bülow, as the latter surmised: for on January 21, Bülow had written to Stockmar as follows: 'Count Stolberg is every inch of him a man of honour: I rate him very highly, and believe that he likewise is well disposed towards me.'

The impression which the visit to England produced on the Prussian side, is described in a letter of Stolberg to Stockmar of March 6, 1842, which is also interesting, in as far as it bears testimony to the impression produced by Stockmar upon a man who had hitherto been an entire stranger to him, and whose antecedents were such as to constitute necessarily an altogether different type of character:

'I feel an overpowering necessity, my most revered Baron, to send you a word of hearty respect from German soil, and to express to you that the days spent in Windsor and London can never be forgotten by me, and that your acquaintance will remain one of the most interesting and most pleasant experiences of my whole life. It is not in my nature or my way,

to say a single word, except as the result of the deepest and truest conviction. But just as little can I restrain from uttering that which fills my breast, in honest and truthful recognition and consideration towards a man whose whole nature has been so sympathetic to me.'

'Pray excuse this plain and unusual language, which I was all the less able to refrain from, that I wished you to be impressed with the ineradicable certainty, that you had made the acquisition of a friend in Northern Germany whose feelings towards you would for ever remain unshaken.'

'The King, my august master, thinks with pleasure of the never to be forgotten time we spent in England; he has been indisposed, but is now well again.'

'We all of us, who accompanied the King, retain a grateful veneration for the amiable and interesting Princess, whose sceptre spans the world, whilst her simple ways gave us confidence, and to whose graciousness and true kindness we owe this never to be forgotten time. We also think of all those who were good and friendly to us, and who have made our recollections of the wonderful and beautiful island still more beautiful.'

'The curtain fell, alas! too quickly after having afforded us but a short glimpse of the life and ways of

men great in European history, on a stage which is as interesting historically, as it is beautiful in its external appearance. The curtain has fallen, but the impression left by what we have seen, can never die out in our recollection; it will always, in its totality as well as in its details, float before the soul in the various colours in which it presented itself to our eyes.

'Accept, my much revered Baron, once more my specially deeply felt thanks for every proof you gave me of your confidence, and be assured that I know how to appreciate this confidence, and that I shall for all times know how to appreciate it, and accept the assurances of my true and unalterable veneration.

A. GRAF ZU STOLBERG.

'Berlin, March 6, 1842.'

A friendly correspondence was kept up between Stolberg and Stockmar for the next few years. Heinrich von Arnim, the Prussian Minister in Brussels, with whom Stockmar had become intimately acquainted there, laid a great value upon the continuance of these relations. 'That your correspondence with Count Stolberg continues, is a real blessing,' writes Arnim, 'and I consider this friendship one of the most satisfactory results of the King's journey to London. In this and other ways, that journey must bear fruit, and please God you will

live to see the day when the "old hard wood" will bend.'

The relations to Stolberg, however, did not, as it turned out, bear any practical fruits, and Stockmar had to see that the 'old hard wood' could be bent only by a revolution.

From this same letter of Arnim's, who had originally introduced Bunsen to Stockmar as his intimate friend, it appears that up to this period (August 1842), no intimate relation had sprung up between the two. Not till some years later did a greater intimacy begin. On September 5, 1844, Bunsen wrote to his wife, 'I have also acquired a friend, Baron Stockmar.'

Stockmar continued his residence in England until October 1842. During this period he dedicated a large portion of his unobtrusive activity to personal questions connected with the Court, and, amongst other things, to the education of the Royal children.

He writes upon this subject on April 20, 1842, as follows:

'I have for months past pursued my plan with unflagging obstinacy. I could not do this, without rendering myself odious, but the difficulties in the way could not stop me. The result is that there is now every prospect that nine-tenths of my proposals will be adopted.'

That Stockmar did not by these endeavours render himself odious in the highest quarters will appear from the following observations of the Queen, contained at p. 188 of 'The Early Years:'

'The Queen, looking back with gratitude and affection to the friend of their early married life, can never forget the assistance given by the Baron to the young couple in regulating their movements and general mode of life, and in directing the education of their children.'

We will select a few passages taken from a memorandum drawn up about this time by Stockmar, for the education of the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal, a fragment not without historical interest.

After pointing out what the general objects of a good education ought to be, Stockmar calls attention to the special difficulties with which the proper education of Royal children has to contend, and which in the present case were increased by the fact, that the natural position of wife and mother were at variance with the constitutional position of Queen and Sovereign. He then goes on as follows:

'Down to the present day England honours the memory of George III. because he cultivated the domestic virtues. History is already taking the liberty of questioning his services as a Sovereign, but

praises without exception his private life. But George III. either did not properly understand his duties as a father, or he neglected them.[1] Three of his sons, George IV., the Duke of York, and William IV., were all brought up in England: the Dukes of Kent, Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge, for the most part, abroad. The faults committed by George IV., the Duke of York, and William IV. already belong to history. Unfortunately, they were of the most marked kind, and we can only explain them by supposing, either that the persons charged with their education were incapable of inculcating principles of truth and morality in their youth, or, that they culpably neglected to do so, or lastly, that they were not properly supported in the fulfilment of this duty, by the Royal parents.'[2]

'There cannot be any doubt, that the conduct of these princes has done more than anything else, to diminish the respect and influence of Monarchy in

[1] Not a little of the blame may, we think, be attributed to the circumstance which the old Duchess of Gloucester, the last survivor of the fifteen children of George III., used invariably to bring up as refrain to the stories she used to tell of the old days, and of the anything but happy family relations of those days: 'The fact is there were too many of us.'

[2] There is yet one other alternative possible. 'Some seeds,' says the Gospel, 'fell upon stony places where they had not much earth.'

this country, and to weaken that strong feeling of loyalty which is peculiar to the English people, and which has distinguished them for centuries.'

'That George IV. did not by his worthless conduct succeed in getting himself excluded from the throne, was the result of the strength of the British Constitution, and of the great political toleration and circumspectness of the practical nation which he governed.'

'The moral portion of the nation detested this prince all his life through, nevertheless he died quietly in possession of the throne. His brother, the Duke of York, after all his follies and mistakes, was yet able to win for a certain time a kind of popularity; and William IV., who for no part of his life was either a moral or a wise man, obtained at the end of his reign the flattering sobriquet of the "Good old Sailor King."

'The explanation of these phenomena is not to be found alone in the strength of the Constitution, and in the toleration and circumspectness of the people. An additional protection was required, which those princes found in the force of national prejudice. The fact is, that all the faults of these princes were looked upon by the public, as thoroughly English faults. I have myself heard it confessed a hundred

times, that though these princes were thoroughly bad, yet that, at all events, their faults were English faults, and that the nation therefore had to take them as they found them, and make the best of it. This national prejudice, which fell out so much to the advantage of the elder princes who had been brought up in England, told in an equal degree to the disadvantage of the younger brothers, who had principally been brought up abroad. As regards their natural disposition, the Dukes of Kent, Cumberland, Sussex, and Cambridge were certainly not inferior to their elder brothers. But as often as in private or public life, they exposed themselves to the censure of the public, they were reproached with having "foreign ideas," and the principal ground of whatever was thought blameworthy in them, was sought for in their foreign education. The result was, that these younger princes, though not one hair's breadth worse than their elder brothers, remained their whole life-long, unpopular with the mass of the nation.'[1]

'This historical survey contains a lesson of the greatest possible importance, and affords the most thorough proof of the view, which I would desire to impress upon the Queen and the Prince Consort, viz.

[1] It must be observed that the Duke of Cambridge became very popular in his latter years.

that the education of the royal children, from the very earliest beginning, should be thoroughly *moral* and thoroughly *English*.'

Stockmar spent the winter of 1842 to 1843 at Coburg; and returned to London on April 2, 1843. The prosperous condition in which he found the Royal Family on his return rejoiced his heart. 'The Queen is well,' he writes; 'the Princess wonderfully improved, and round like a little barrel; the Prince of Wales, though suffering from his teeth, is strong on his legs, and has a steady, clear, and cheerful countenance. The Prince Father is well and contented, although he often looks pale, fatigued, and exhausted. His character developes very rapidly. There is in him a practical talent, by means of which he in a moment seizes what is really important in any matter, drives his talons into it, like a vulture into his prey, and flies off with it to his nest.'

In August 1843, Stockmar returned to the Continent, but the spring of 1844 saw him again in England.

The year 1844 was remarkable for the number of illustrious persons who visited the English Court. In June the Emperor Nicholas and the King of Saxony appeared; in August, the Prince of Prussia; and in October, King Louis Philippe. Stockmar's papers

contain memoranda and notes in connection with the visit of the Emperor Nicholas, which are not only interesting, as characterising the person of the autocrat of all the Russias, but of importance in regard to the political history of the time.

For the proper understanding of the following extract, it is necessary to premise that Russia, although she, as we have seen, signed and ratified the treaties of 1831 and 1839, by which Belgium was constituted, had nevertheless up to the present time avoided entering into diplomatic relations with her. Immediately before concluding the treaty of 1839, Belgium had, in view of a war with Holland, given the Emperor Nicholas special cause of displeasure, by taking several Polish officers into her army, and naming, amongst others, Skrzynecki to be a Belgian general of division. The visit of the Emperor to the Queen of England, naturally suggested an attempt to see whether Nicholas might not be found willing to place his official relations with the uncle of the Queen upon a regular and proper footing.

Memorandum of Stockmar's of June 6, 1844.

'As soon as the visit of the Emperor Nicholas appeared probable, Stockmar spoke with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lord Aberdeen, respecting the

possibility of using this opportunity, for establishing diplomatic relations between Russia and Belgium.

'He found Lord Aberdeen's readiness so great, and his views so in accordance with his own, that there was nothing left to be desired, and it was agreed, that he (Lord Aberdeen) should sound the ground through Orloff.

'On June 4 and 5, the Emperor had long interviews with Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Peel. In that with Lord Aberdeen, and before the latter had turned the conversation in the direction of Belgium, the Emperor broke out suddenly and hastily, "You want to speak to me about Belgium?" "Not just yet," was the answer. "Well, then," said the Emperor, "speak to me at once on the subject. Let us sit down. I will forget that I am Emperor, do you forget that you are Minister of England. Let us be, I, Nicholas, you, Aberdeen. Well! I hear your Queen wishes that I should enter into friendly relations with Leopold. There is nothing I should like more. I have always liked and respected the Queen's uncle, and I should be heartily glad to be able to return to our old footing of intimacy. But as long as the Polish officers remain in the service of the King, this is absolutely impossible; as I said before, let us judge of the matter, not as Emperor and Minister, but simply as

'gentlemen.' The Poles are, and remain, rebels: can a gentleman take into his service persons who have rebelled against his friend? Leopold has taken rebels under his protection. What would you say, if I were to take O'Connell under my protection, and were to make him my Minister? As regards Skrzynecki, the matter is not so bad. He was no longer in actual service. But the case of Kruczewski is different, and very bad. He was aide-de-camp to my brother Constantine, and Leopold gives him a confidential post about his person, and has named him general. Can one gentleman act thus by another? Tell your Queen, that as soon as Her Majesty informs me that the Poles have left the service of the King, the very next morning my Minister will receive orders to proceed to Brussels, without a moment's delay."

'"I have never recognised the Belgian Revolution, and will never do so. But later, I recognised the Belgian State. I know how to stick to my word; I respect treaties, and fulfil them honourably; it is my duty therefore to care for the maintenance of Belgium, as it is to care for the maintenance of every other existing State in Europe. I wish for the prosperity of Belgium, just as I do for that of every other State."

'Then, turning to the subject of France, the Emperor spoke in the following sense:

'"Louis Philippe has merited well of Europe; this I frankly admit. I myself can never be his friend. His family is said to be thoroughly respectable and amiable. But he, what has he done? In order to give himself a position and to strengthen himself in it, he has attempted to undermine and to ruin my position as Russian Emperor. This I will never forgive him. I am no Carlist. A few days before the appearance of the ordinances,[1] I warned Charles X. against a *coup d'état*, and predicted what the result would be; he thereupon gave me his word of honour (*sa parole d'honneur*) that he had no intention of a *coup d'état*, and immediately afterwards published the ordinances. I shall never give my support to Henri V. Upon being sounded whether Henri V. might pay me a visit, I caused him to be informed that I would receive him privately; but that, as a private reception of this kind might damage his cause in the eyes of Europe, and discourage his friends and supporters, I thought it would be best for him to give up the visit altogether."

'"I do not approve of the comedy which Henri V.

[1] The July Ordinances of 1830.

has been playing in England.[1] He may comfort himself with the consciousness of being that which he is, viz. the legitimate King of France; but he must do nothing more: to play the Pretender is absurd."

'After this conversation, Orloff came to Aberdeen, and spoke to him in far greater detail with respect to the Belgian matter. He assured him that it was really highly disagreeable to the Emperor, that events should have placed hindrances in the way of his being on good terms with Belgium. The Emperor, however, thought that the Queen of England possessed great influence over her uncle, and could therefore remove the obstacles out of the way. This it was impossible for the Emperor himself to do, on account of the policy he had followed in the matter until now, and especially on account of the strong public declarations which he had made on the subject. "Perhaps," observed Orloff, "these declarations have been too strong; but there they are, and the Emperor cannot back out of them."'

'The Emperor asked what steps should be taken with respect to the reception of the diplomatic body.

[1] This refers to the sojourn of the Duc de Bordeaux in London in 1843, and to the legitimist demonstrations of the time, which the French Chamber of Deputies stigmatised in its address in 1844 (*affaire de la flétrissure*).

It was hinted to him by Orloff, that this reception would be of great use, but that the British Minister could under no circumstances admit, that exceptions should be made in a reception of this kind. There were amongst the diplomatic body representatives of three Powers (Belgium, Spain, and Portugal), whose envoys the Emperor had hitherto refused to receive: it was therefore necessary, either not to see the diplomatic corps at all, or to receive them all without exception.

'Thereupon the Emperor determined to receive the whole of the *corps diplomatique*, and Orloff assured Lord Aberdeen, that the Emperor would be personally very gracious to Van der Weyer. Brunnow gave the same promise.'

'The subject which appears to be occupying most of the Emperor's thoughts is the East, and this, very probably, is the main reason of his visit. Perhaps he wished himself to see, and to sound, and to compare what he may see and hear, with the reports of his diplomatic agents.'

'He said to Aberdeen: "Turkey is a dying man. We may endeavour to keep him alive, but we shall not succeed. He will, he must die. That will be a critical moment. I foresee that I shall have to put my armies in movement, and Austria must do the

same. I fear nobody in the matter, but France. What will she require? I fear, much: in Africa, in the Mediterranean, in the East itself. Do you remember the expedition to Ancona? Why should she not undertake similar ones to Candia or Smyrna? In such a case, must not England be on the spot with the whole of her maritime forces? Thus a Russian army, an Austrian army, a great English fleet, all congregated together in those parts. So many powder barrels close to the fire, how shall one prevent the sparks from catching?"

'"I cannot endure Guizot. I like him still less than Thiers, who is a *fanfaron*, but 'frank,' and less hurtful and dangerous than Guizot, who has behaved infamously towards Molé (*hinc illæ lachrymæ!* observes Stockmar), the most honourable man in all France."

'On the occasion of the Emperor's conversation with Sir Robert Peel, the windows were open. The Emperor spoke so loud that the persons outside could hear all that he said, and the Premier was obliged to ask His Majesty to withdraw to the end of the room.'

'The Emperor spoke with extraordinary warmth, and praised Prince Albert with tears in his eyes. He said that he knew that people considered him as

playing a part, but that really he was a thoroughly honest man.'

'In this conversation, too, it was apparent that the East was at that time exclusively occupying the Emperor's attention.'

"'Turkey," he said, "must fall to pieces. Nesselrode denies this, but *I* for my part am fully convinced of it. The Sultan is no genius, but he is at least a man. Let some misfortune happen to him, what then? A child with a Regency. I don't claim one inch of Turkish soil, but neither will I allow that any other shall have an inch of it."

'The Premier replied, that England, in regard to the East, was in a similar position, except that, on one point, the policy of England was slightly modified, namely in regard to Egypt. Too powerful a Government there—a Government that might close the commercial road across Egypt against England, or refuse the transit of the English overland mails—could not be agreeable to England.'

'The Emperor went on: "We cannot now stipulate as to what shall be done with Turkey when she is dead. Such stipulations would only hasten her death. I shall therefore do all in my power to maintain the *status quo*. But nevertheless, we should keep the possible and eventual case of her collapse honestly

and reasonably before our eyes. We ought to deliberate reasonably, and endeavour to come to a straightforward and honest understanding on the subject."

'The Premier, in his reply, incidentally observed, that one of the great objects of his policy would be to see that the French throne descended without any convulsion, after the death of Louis Philippe, to the next legitimate heir of the House of Orleans.'

'To this the Emperor replied, "I have nothing against that. I wish the French all possible prosperity. But they cannot have this without quiet. They cannot be allowed to make explosions abroad. Hence you may rest assured that I am not the least jealous of your '*bonne entente*' with France; it can only be of use to myself and to Europe. You have thereby got an influence, which you can use for the general good. Through you I hope to be able to keep France in order. For the rest, I have in no wise come here with a political object in view. I wish to win your confidence, and that you should learn to believe that I am upright and honourable. It is for this purpose that I thus speak out openly. Despatches cannot bring about what I desire."

'"Years ago Lord Durham was sent to me, a man filled with prejudices against me. Merely by contact

with me, his prejudices were all driven to the winds. And this is what I hope to bring about with you, and generally in England. I hope to dissipate those prejudices by personal intercourse. For I highly prize England; but for what the French choose to say about me I care not at all—I spit upon it."'

Stockmar, under date of June 11, makes the following reflections on the above:

'I believe that the Emperor came over to England in order, by times, to throw a counter-weight in the scale against France. He appears convinced of the approaching decease of Turkey. His assurance, "I do not wish for one inch of Turkey, but neither can I allow anyone else to take any portion of her," seems to me to express the true policy of Russia. To maintain Russia as she is, must be difficult enough, to add yet more to her size, might prove a dangerous undertaking. A Russian extension of territory, at the expense of Turkey, might force Austria, France, and England to ally themselves to prevent it. Such an alliance would have to think of ways and means, which, if followed with good fortune, might easily lead to those provinces of Russia being separated from her, which give her her present preponderance in Europe. Nicholas can hardly regard himself in the light of a fortunate general, and therefore it may

well be that he is in earnest on the subject of a policy of maintaining the *status quo*. He may possibly say to himself:

'"France and England believe as little as I do in the continued existence of Turkey; they must foresee her death, and prepare for the event. It is of the utmost importance to me to know what is going on in this direction, and to draw England over to my side; for England can have no projects on Turkey herself; but France may, and so I must keep France in check by means of England." He endeavours therefore to inspire the English with confidence in his personal motives, and, on the other hand, to excite their distrust in the ambition of France. This is thoroughly Russian.'

Respecting the general impression of the visit Stockmar writes as follows:

'The visit has gone off satisfactorily to the great joy of Orloff and Brunnow, who appear to have strongly urged the journey on the Emperor. His Majesty did his best to be friendly, and to show himself in the most favourable light. I believe that, on the whole, he succeeded in making those who, without having seen him, had nourished a strong antipathy to him, better disposed towards him. A phrase which he often used and addressed to almost everyone with

whom he came into contact was: "I know that I am taken for an actor; but such is not the case, I am thoroughly straightforward; I say what I mean, and I keep my word." The mistrustful, who go by the motto "*qui s'excuse s'accuse*," will hardly have had their confidence increased by such words. But they may have done some good with those good-natured persons who are not burthened with too large a share of the knowledge of mankind, or with a propensity to reflection.'

'He is still a great admirer of female beauty. He treated all his old English flames with the greatest attention. This, together with his stately figure and his general politeness to the fair sex, certainly won for him the majority of the ladies whom he approached. The men praised the dignity, tact, and punctiliousness which he displayed in his social intercourse. He won the racing men at Ascot by founding the Ascot prize of 500 guineas, and pleased the court officials on his departure by endless snuff-boxes and large presents.'

The above notes of Stockmar in so far deserve attention, that although it has been hitherto known[1] that the Emperor Nicholas had, in the year 1844, had con-

[1] Kinglake's 'Invasion of the Crimea,' vol. i. chap. iv.; Wurm, 'Orientalische Frage,' p. 347.

versations with Peel and Aberdeen respecting the Oriental question, nothing was known respecting their substance, except the indirect testimony, open to many doubts, borne by the Russian memorandum of June 1844, which was laid before Parliament in 1854, simultaneously with the confidential despatches of Sir Hamilton Seymour respecting the sick man. The substance of the conversations as given by Stockmar, suggests the following remarks.

As regards the attempt to establish diplomatic relations between St. Petersburg and Brussels, it remained for the present without results. The Polish officers were partly naturalised in Belgium, nor could they be dismissed without imposing too heavy a burthen on the budget. In fact it was by no means easy to get rid of them. Not till the year 1852 did Belgium feel it in her interest, in view of the relations in which she at that time stood towards France, to remove the obstacles which were in the way of regular diplomatic intercourse with Russia. A Royal Ordinance placed the Polish officers in a state of non-activity, and a law of March 12, 1853, settled their money claims. Soon afterwards a Belgian and a Russian Minister were accredited respectively at Petersburg and Brussels.

For the history of the Oriental question a com-

parison between the report of Stockmar and the Russian memorandum of 1844 above referred to, is not without interest. This memorandum was at the time of its publication by the English Government, described as a *pro memoria* of Count Nesselrode; based upon communications made by the Emperor to him after his visit in England, and communicated to the English Cabinet in June 1844.

The main substance of this memorandum is as follows:

'1. England and Russia have a common interest in maintaining the *status quo* in Turkey.

'2. But Turkey contains many elements of dissolution.

'3. The dangers of a catastrophe might be sensibly diminished if, in the event of such a catastrophe, Russia and England were to come to an understanding.

'4. The Emperor, during his visit in London, agreed with the English Ministers, that in case anything unforeseen should happen in Turkey, Russia and England should come to a previous understanding with each other, as to what they should have to do in common (que s'il arrivait quelque chose d'imprévu en Turquie, la Russie et l'Angleterre se concerteraient préalablement entre elles sur ce qu'elles auraient à faire en commun).

'5. Russia and Austria are already agreed; if Eng-

land join them, France will be obliged to adhere unconditionally to whatever those Cabinets may decide upon.'

If with these extracts of the memorandum we compare Stockmar's notes, we are struck by the fact that the latter contain nothing in regard to the agreement between the Emperor and the English Ministry respecting a future 'concert préalable, le cas échéant.' It is clear that Stockmar's report is based upon what he was told by Lord Aberdeen. Why the latter should have passed over the 'concert préalable' in silence, might form the subject of many conjectures. That the Emperor broached the subject, may be safely inferred from the Russian memorandum. That the English Ministers could not reject such a proposal, is obvious. But that England, by agreeing to a *future* 'concert préalable le cas échéant,' practically bound herself to nothing at all, is equally evident. If an 'unforeseen event' occurred in Turkey, and if in such a case Russia, as proposed in the memorandum, first sought to come to an understanding with England, it lay neither in the policy nor in the traditions of England to refuse to listen to such proposals. But nothing pledged her to accept the proposals which Russia might make.

To all appearance the memorandum was intended

to hide the defeat which the Emperor had experienced in England, with his soundings in regard to the Oriental question, and his insinuations against France; and for this purpose the empty phrases respecting the 'concert préalable' had to be represented, as if the Imperial conversation had yielded a positive result satisfactory to Russia.

The most important result, viz. the way in which the English Ministers repelled the Russian attempt to withdraw them from France, comes out very clearly in Stockmar's notes. Sir Robert Peel declares that the maintenance of the Orleans dynasty is one of the principal objects of his policy. It would hence appear not unlikely that, as the author of 'Thirty Years of Foreign Policy' assures us, the English Ministry at once communicated the contents of the memorandum to Guizot. On the other hand, it will be seen that the Orleans dynasty showed itself a few years later not particularly grateful to England. At all events, such was the impression caused in this country by the complications of the Spanish marriages.

Stockmar returned to the Continent in September. Shortly after his departure, as it would appear, he had drawn up a memorandum[1] on the present state

[1] The following is the docket of this memorandum: 'Observations on the present state of the Royal Household; written with a

of the Royal Household with a view to its reform, from which we will subjoin a few extracts, because the peculiarity of the state of things described in it is likely to afford amusement to the uninitiated. The English Court, at the present day, is one of the best ordered courts in Europe; the organisation is practical, the service is done with exemplary regularity and punctuality. On the Queen's accession to the throne, on the contrary, the existing arrangements were in the highest degree unpractical and confused, and resulted in disorder and discomfort. The details respecting the former system given by Stockmar in his memorandum, afford a remarkable instance of the way in which in England old-established institutions and usages, with their burthensome obligations and their absurd and uncomfortable results, are adhered to with pedantic conscientiousness, simply because it lies in the English character to distrust the results of theoretic insight, and consequently to feel the greatest dread of anything like a systematic and comprehensive reconstruction of things. The proposals of reform made by Stockmar afford a good instance of the way, in which a totally senseless system may be changed

view to amend the present scheme, and to unite the greater security and comfort of the Sovereign with the greater regularity and better discipline of the Royal Household.'

into a rational and practical one, without necessarily breaking with pre-existing forms.

To understand what follows, it is necessary to premise, that the Royal Household in England was on the Queen's accession divided into three great departments, those of the Lord Steward, the Lord Chamberlain, and the Master of the Horse.

The three highest court officials were at the same time great officers of State, who changed with every Ministry. None of them remained permanently at the Court; no kind of link bound the departments together; their respective limits were wholly arbitrary, unpractical, and in part undetermined. On this state of things Stockmar remarks as follows:

Stockmar's Memorandum on the Royal Household.

'All the important court appointments being mere ministerial arrangements, the real qualification for each office can of course be only a secondary consideration. But supposing, for argument's sake, that the qualification be in every case what it ought to be, there is a circumstance which renders the permanency of any household system, and a uniform and efficient administration, quite impossible. The great officers of state, who are always noblemen of high rank and political consideration, change with every Government.

Since the year 1830 we find five changes in the office of the Lord Chamberlain, and six in that of the Lord Steward.

'Then there is another great inconvenience. It is, that none of the great officers can reside in the palace, and that most frequently they cannot even reside in the same place with the Court. Hence, an uninterrupted and effective personal inspection and superintendence of the daily details of their respective departments, are made impracticable. Hence follows another bad consequence. Most frequently the great officers of State find themselves so situated, as to be forced to delegate, *pro tempore*, part of their authority to others. From want of proper regulations, they must delegate it, as it were, *extempore*, and to servants very inferior in rank in the Royal Household; a fact which, almost daily, is productive of consequences injurious to the dignity, order, discipline, and security of the Court.

'Further, there is between the three departments no proper system of co-operation and concurrence, insuring unity of purpose and action. The work is parcelled out in a ridiculous manner among them, so as to impede the satisfactory progress of business. A few illustrations will prove the truth of this assertion.

'To begin with the Palace itself. One should think that the simplest and best mode would have been, to have placed the whole building under the charge of one department. But not only is it placed under three departments, but it is quite undecided what parts of the palace are under the charge of the Lord Chamberlain, and which under the Lord Steward. In the time of George III., the Lord Steward had the custody and charge of the whole palace, excepting the Royal apartments, drawing rooms, &c., &c. In George IV.'s and William IV.'s reign, it was held that the whole of the ground-floor, including halls, dining-rooms, &c., were in his charge. In the present reign, the Lord Steward has surrendered to the Lord Chamberlain the grand hall and other rooms on the ground-floor; but whether the kitchen, sculleries, pantries, remain under his charge, *quoad the rooms*, is a question which no one could perhaps at this moment reply to. The outside of the palace is, however, considered to belong to the Woods and Forests; so that as the inside cleaning of the windows belongs to the Lord Chamberlain's department, the degree of light to be admitted into the palace depends proportionably on the well-timed and good understanding between the Lord Chamberlain's Office and that of the Woods and Forests.

'Anyone who has some knowledge of the movements of a household machinery on a large scale, and of the characters of the persons called servants, would insist that, in order to enforce existing regulations, good order, and discipline, the whole train of servants living in the palace should be placed under one department, and under the charge of one directing officer. But what do we find in the Royal Household?

'The housekeepers, pages, housemaids, &c., are under the authority of the Lord Chamberlain; all the footmen, livery-porters, and under-butlers, by the strangest anomaly, under that of the Master of the Horse, at whose office they are clothed and paid, and the rest of the servants, such as the clerk of the kitchen, the cooks, the porters, &c., are under the jurisdiction of the Lord Steward. Yet these ludicrous divisions not only extend to persons, but they extend likewise to things and actions. The Lord Steward, for example, finds the fuel and lays the fire, and the Lord Chamberlain lights it. It was upon this state of things that the writer of this paper, having been sent one day by Her present Majesty to Sir Frederick Watson, then the Master of the Household, to complain that the dining-room was always cold, was gravely answered, "You see, properly speaking, it is

not our fault; for the Lord Steward lays the fire only, and the Lord Chamberlain lights it." In the same manner the Lord Chamberlain provides all the lamps, and the Lord Steward must clean, trim, and light them. If a pane of glass, or the door of a cupboard in the scullery, requires mending, it cannot now be done without the following process: A requisition is prepared and signed by the chief cook, it is then counter-signed by the clerk of the kitchen, then it is taken to be signed by the Master of the Household, thence it is taken to the Lord Chamberlain's Office, where it is authorised, and then laid before the Clerk of the Works, under the office of Woods and Forests; and consequently many a window and cupboard have remained broken for months.

'A machinery such as we have described the Royal Household to be, could only be made to work tolerably well on one condition, viz., that a responsible officer of some rank were residing in the palace, in whom, for certain and specific objects, part of that authority, which is divided amongst the three chief departments, were concentrated again by a sort of delegation from these very departments themselves. At present no such officer exists. There is, indeed, in the palace a resident officer, called a Master of the Household, who belongs to the Lord Steward's depart-

ment. But in the Lord Chamberlain's department, which includes housekeepers, pages, housemaids, the authority of the Master of the Household is entirely unrecognised, and even in the Lord Steward's department it is quite undefined. It depends altogether upon the chief officers, whom political changes place over the Master of the Household, to what extent they will delegate their power to him, leaving the servants in the palace at a loss to know whether they are, or not, to regard his authority. The Master of the Household's office, as at present constituted, may therefore be pronounced to be, to all practical intents and purposes, a nullity.

'As neither the Lord Chamberlain, nor the Master of the Horse, have a regular deputy residing in the palace, more than two thirds of all the male and female servants are left without a master in the house. They can come on and go off duty as they choose, they can remain absent for hours and hours on their days of waiting, or they may commit any excess or irregularity: there is nobody to observe, to correct, or to reprimand them. The various details of internal arrangement, whereon depends the well-being and comfort of the whole establishment, no one is cognisant of or responsible for. There is no officer responsible for the cleanliness, order, and security of the rooms

and offices throughout the palace. These things are left to Providence ; and if smoking, drinking, and other irregularities occur in the dormitories, where footmen, &c. sleep ten and twelve in each room, no one can help it.

There is no one who attends to the comfort of the Queen's guests on their arrival at the royal residence. When they arrive, at present, there is no one prepared to show them to or from their apartments ; there is no gentleman in the palace who even knows where they are lodged, and there is not even a servant who can perform this duty, which is attached to the Lord Chamberlain's department. It frequently happens at Windsor, that some of the visitors are at a loss to find the drawing-room, and at night, if they happen to forget the right entrance from the corridors, they wander for an hour helpless and unassisted. There is nobody to apply to in such a case, for it is not in the department of the Master of the Household, and the only remedy is, to send a servant, if one can be found, to the porter's lodge, to ascertain the apartment in question.

'On the occasion of the late intrusion of a lad[1] into

[1] It was immediately after the birth of the Princess Royal, in November 1840, that the boy Jones was discovered, at 1 o'clock in the morning, under the sofa in the room adjoining H.M.'s bedroom.

the palace, which certainly might have endangered the Queen's life, the public attached blame, and I think with much reason, to the person or persons on whom depend the regulations for the protection of the Queen's person. But I shall presently show, that there was no person in the palace on whom such responsibility could rightly be fixed; for it certainly did not fall on the Lord Chamberlain, who was in Staffordshire, and in whose department the porters are not; nor on the Lord Steward, who was in town, and who has nothing to do with the disposition of the pages and other parties nearest to the royal person; nor, finally, on the Master of the Household, whom we have above shown to be only a subordinate officer in the Lord Steward's department.

'On whom does it then fall? Entirely on the absence of system, which leaves the royal palace without any responsible authority.'

It would take us too far to give any detailed account of the reforms proposed by Stockmar. It will suffice to point out the principle upon which they were based, which was the following one, viz., to maintain the three great officers of Court, with their respective departments, in their *connection* with the political system of the country, but to induce them,

each in his own sphere, to delegate as much of his authority as was necessary to the maintenance of the order, discipline, and security of the palace, to *one* official, who should always reside at Court and be responsible to the three departmental chiefs, but at the same time be able to secure unity of action in the use of the power delegated to him.

The reform of the royal household was undertaken according to these principles by the Prince Consort and carried out with firmness and prudence. The Master of the Household, who, as we have seen, had been until then a subordinate official of the Lord Chamberlain and possessed of very undefined power, was named delegate of the three departments.

Stockmar spent all the interval between the autumn of 1844 and the spring of 1846 in Germany.

It was a long time since he had made so protracted a stay as this in the Fatherland. A letter of his to Bunsen, dated Coburg, in the early portion of the year 1846, gives the impression made upon him by German affairs:

'Seventeen months have passed since I parted from you in England. Having been almost uninterruptedly abroad from 1837 to 1844, my own country had become all but a *terra incognita* to me. I therefore instinctively took to observing the actual

conditions of German life, and have come to the conclusion that the elements which constitute it, and which move and rule it, are good and healthy. It appears to me that there is everywhere present a desire for improvement, daily gaining in strength and telling of national progress; but everywhere I found in hostile opposition to this process external forces, which by division, impediments, and poison, endeavour to counteract the natural and organic development of the nation. The spirit which is now animating and impelling our people causes me no fear; not so the unfortunate spirit of our rulers, who, misunderstanding the true nature of the forces at work in the people, attempt to obtain the mastery over them, and to shape them into forms in which no healthy popular life is possible. The quacks will not succeed in coercing public opinion in the sense they wish, but my fear is, that they may cripple the patient, and perhaps for a long while afflict him with dangerous disease, when, in our own time, he might have been made, with proper treatment, to enjoy good health and happiness. I am truly distressed to see the great mistakes that have been committed, especially with you (i.e. in Prussia), and the way in which opportunities have been neglected which are not likely to occur again.'

The same letter refers to the loss of Bülow, who in 1842 had really become Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs, but in 1845 had, in consequence of disease of the brain, been forced to retire, and who finally died on February 6, 1846.

'Bülow is dead,' writes Stockmar. 'I expected his death. It is not likely that he will ever obtain the proper recognition of his services, during the period of his best activity, i.e. in the years 1832–35, in which over-anxiety and an excessive sense of responsibility, laid the germs of the disease of which he ultimately died. The peculiarity of my position in England, gave him courage to place exceptional confidence in me, and I was thus enabled to obtain a clear insight into the character of the man, and into the importance of the political work which he achieved, as it were, in the dark and half concealed.'[1]

From May 1846 to April 1847 Stockmar resided in England. It was the critical period of the Spanish Marriages Question, with which we shall have to occupy ourselves in the following chapter.

[1] Cf. Vol. I. p. 239 et seq., in reference to Bülow.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SPANISH MARRIAGES.

1840–1847.

Marriage of the Queen of Spain, October 10, 1846—The impression in France and England—The previous history—Guizot's observation in 1840—The pretensions of France, in the year 1844, that the Consort must be a Bourbon—The insinuations of Queen Christina in favour of a Coburg—The feeling in England regarding the candidature of Prince Leopold of Coburg—Conduct of Lord Palmerston; that of Lord Aberdeen—of Prince Albert and Stockmar—of King Leopold—What was done in England for this candidature—The Agreement of Eu, 1843—From this time the candidature of Prince Leopold became the French bugbear—The first fright in November—The French began to attribute to the Agreement of Eu things it never contained, in order to be able to declare themselves as absolved from observing it—The memorandum of Guizot of February 27, 1846, is conceived with this intention, with a view to the future—Aberdeen plays the part of ostrich—Queen Christina formally applies for the Coburg (May 1846)—Second great fright of the French—Sir Henry Bulwer's assistance—He is disavowed by Aberdeen—This defeats a plan formed by the French—The change effected by Palmerston's accession to office (beginning of July 1846)—Mutual distrust—Change in the relations between England and Spain—The first negotiations—France favours Don Francisco—England Don Enrique—The two Princes—Palmerston's mistakes, and distrust of him, increase the temptation on the French side, to play the game sketched out in the memorandum of February 27, 1846—Palmerston's despatch of July 19, 1846—No violation of the Agreement of Eu, but in various respects impolitic—Bresson's conduct in Madrid in favour of the double

marriage—Montpensier and Don Francisco—Louis Philippe's scruples hushed by Guizot—The effect of Palmerston's despatch of July 19, in Paris and Madrid—The double betrothal, August 28—Guizot justifies himself by hinting at pretended deviations on the part of England from the Agreement of Eu—The groundlessness of these assertions—Guizot's explanations to Lord Normanby—Louis Philippe's conduct to the English Court—Letter of Queen Amélie (September 8)—Impression in England—Answer of Queen Victoria (September 10)—Letter of Louis Philippe to his daughter in Belgium—Answer of Queen Victoria of September 27—The feeling at the English Court—Stockmar's judgment of the French policy in this affair—His prophecy—Letter of the refugee Louis Philippe, March 3, 1848—Extract from an Essay of Stockmar's on the Spanish marriages—Stockmar leaves England April 1847—Observations on the development of character in the Prince and the Queen—Foreboding of political disturbances—Journey to Berlin—On the development of affairs in Prussia since the summoning of the United Diet—Letter to Bunsen of July 11, 1847.

ON the 10th of October, 1846, the Queen Isabella of Spain married her cousin Don Francisco, Duke of Cadiz, the son of the sister of her mother Christina; and the Queen's sister, the Infanta Louisa Ferdinanda, married at the same time the Duke de Montpensier, youngest son of King Louis Philippe.

Louis Philippe rejoiced in the triumph of his family policy and the good stroke of business he had done for his son, and Guizot exulted in the diplomatic victory he had achieved over England in this affair, which he designates in his letters to the King, as 'la grande affaire,' 'la grosse affaire' (see the 'Revue rétrospective'), for securing the preponderance of France and the French dynasty.

The English Court was deeply offended, Lord Palmerston angry, the whole nation, without distinction of party, embittered, and the *entente cordiale* with France destroyed.[1]

And how is it now?[2] King Louis Philippe and his dynasty have long since lost the French throne, Queen Isabella has been driven away, the Spaniards are hesitating between a Monarchy and a Republic, and one of the candidates for the throne is the Duke de Montpensier. How differently have things turned out to what the wise politicians of 1846 hoped or feared! What has become of the advantages which the French King and his Minister hoped to gain for France and the Orleans family from those marriages?

What too has become of the evils which Lord Palmerston and England at that time vehemently announced to the world, as the consequence of the Montpensier marriage?

We possess very ample and authentic materials

[1] In the beginning of 1847, the discussions in the papers, and the speeches in both countries, had so increased the existing feeling of animosity, that great fears were felt for the maintenance of peace. Stockmar writes on February 19, 1847: 'I had a long conversation with Peel yesterday. He does not really believe in the maintenance of peace. He considers there is open hostility in the speeches of Guizot and Broglie' (in the French debates on the address).

[2] Written early in 1870.

for the history of the Spanish marriages in the papers presented to the English Parliament, in the 'Revue rétrospective' for 1848, and still more in a long passage of above 200 pages in the 8th vol. of Guizot's Memoirs. More might easily be added from Stockmar's papers. But who would have the heart, in the present altered state of affairs, to dive once more into the whirlpool of those intrigues, not even yet to be entirely unravelled, or to wade through the floods of angry English and French correspondence, arising from the events of the 10th of October 1846, and especially the controversy on the Peace of Utrecht? We shall be satisfied if, according to our materials, we can throw some light on that side of the matter which came more immediately under Stockmar's own observation—that of the personal conduct of the courts concerned, and the, so to speak, personal conflict of honour which arose out of the Spanish marriages, between the highest authorities in England and France. For the right understanding of the whole situation, we must recapitulate the principal facts of the case.

From a memorandum of Stockmar's we gather the noteworthy fact, that the plan of marrying the Queen of Spain to the Duke of Cadiz, and her sister the Infanta to the Duke of Montpensier, was thought of by Guizot as early as 1840. 'It is a fact,' writes Stock-

mar, 'when Palmerston was in Paris in 1840, and at Guizot's desire had a long conversation with him on the general position of European affairs, that Guizot said, in adverting to Spain, "The Queen will marry Cadiz, and then Montpensier will marry the Infanta." Palmerston then brought forward the objections which England must entertain to such a marriage, especially in case the Queen should die childless; but Guizot only said, "La Reine aura des enfants et ne mourra pas."'

In the year 1841, the public attention both in England and France, began to be directed towards the probability of the two Spanish marriages. Louis Philippe would gladly have won the hand of Isabella for one of his sons; he even seems to have discussed the probability of such an alliance with Queen Christina. But he must have been soon convinced that here he would experience a determined opposition on the part of England. He therefore repeatedly and loudly disclaimed any such design for one of his sons. On the other hand, he and Guizot openly announced, as the unalterable demand of France, the principle, that the husband of the Queen of Spain must be a Bourbon, one of the descendants of Philippe V., and steadily pursued their aim of securing the Infanta for Montpensier. Family pride and French vanity

coincided in the wish to keep the Bourbons on the throne of Spain. In a political point of view Guizot hoped, by adducing and maintaining the principle that Isabella's husband must be a Bourbon, to disprove the constant reproach of the Opposition, that the foreign policy of the July Monarchy was both timid and subservient. He would show practically, in a question of some magnitude and of a certain historical import, that he understood how to carry out the wishes of France, and make her power and influence felt in Europe. He saw in his own policy in regard to the Spanish marriages the most powerful means of upholding monarchical principles in Spain, and of strengthening thereby the Orleans dynasty in France; there being great fear of the Spanish Exaltados, and the evil influence they might exercise on France. The projected alliance for Montpensier was advantageous, according to the usual considerations of position and money, promised a solid footing to French influence in Spain for the present time, and opened for the unknown future, the possibility that a grandson of Louis Philippe might occupy the Spanish throne—'les chances inconnues d'un avenir lointain,' says Guizot.[1]

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 227. The quotations are given according to the edition published in Paris and Leipzig.

The Queen Mother, Christina, appears from the first to have wished that one, or even both, of her daughters should marry a French prince. She saw in such an alliance, a certainty of securing the support of France for herself and the Moderados, as against the Progressists. It is true, that in the year 1841, she insinuated to the English in an indirect and underhand manner, through three different persons, that she wished for a Coburg prince for her daughter Isabella, and mentioned first the Hereditary Prince, and then Prince Leopold, the brother of King Ferdinand of Portugal.

No attention on the part of the English was paid to these overtures. They were considered as not meant in earnest, or rather as made in concert with Louis Philippe, with the object of discovering the views of the English Cabinet.

In England, the possible candidature of Prince Leopold (for the Hereditary Prince was out of the question) was at first decidedly unpopular. Lord Palmerston, before he left office (end of August 1841), had declared that the Prince was too nearly connected with the Duc de Nemours (who had married his sister); and Queen Victoria, under Lord Palmerston's influence, was rather against, than for, the alliance. Palmerston's successor, Aberdeen, always ready to

take any means to preserve a good understanding with France, was willing to accept a Bourbon as the husband of the Queen of Spain, so long as he was not a son of Louis Philippe; and at the same time was afraid of the difficulties that might arise with France, from the candidature of Leopold. The position he assumed in regard to the pretensions of France, is clearly shown in his despatch of March 16, 1842, to Sir Robert Gordon.[1] He there says that 'for political reasons connected with the preservation of the balance of power in Europe, England would not look with indifference on the choice of a French Prince. On the other hand, she could not recognise in France, or in any other Power, any right whatever to dispose of the hand of the Queen of Spain; and therefore could not acknowledge as a principle the French demand, that her consort must of necessity be a Bourbon. Yet we by no means pretend to place a veto upon the family of Bourbon, and should the choice of the Queen and her Government fall on one, we should have nothing to say against it.'

His cousin, Prince Albert, and Stockmar, were only conditionally in favour of Leopold. They never looked on the success of his candidature as a thing to be ardently desired and achieved at any price, but as

[1] 'Correspondence relating to the Marriages,' &c., p. 1.

an object that might be attained, if the circumstances were propitious, by honourable and wise means, viz. by such means as could be employed without injuring more important interests. King Leopold's attitude was yet more indifferent and philosophical; his delicate position in regard to France requiring peculiar caution. The task that the Prince Consort and Stockmar took upon themselves, in this state of affairs, was only to clear the way for the Prince, if fate decreed him such a position, and to overcome the obstacles thrown in his way, not by real difficulties, but by party misrepresentations. Stockmar never thought hopefully of the final issue, but the character and results of his efforts will be best perceived through a letter of his dated May 14, 1842.

'As to the Spanish marriage, my wishes and feelings do not influence my judgment, which must be governed only by good sense. This is my view of the subject:

'The Queen must have a husband against whom, in the first place, Spain and Europe can have little objection, in a political point of view, and who, in the second place, is, as a man, mentally and physically so endowed as to give good hopes that he will fill the difficult position of husband of a Queen of Spain, with some measure of success.'

'The existing Bourbons, tried by either of these

standards, have much against them. Our candidate is, in a political point of view, for Spain and for the true interests of Europe, more suitable than many others; and to this may be added, that the relationship with Portugal would probably, in this case, prove a useful element, in placing the two dynasties on that friendly footing, on which, for the benefit of both countries, they should always stand.'

'But it is another question whether Leopold possesses the necessary personal qualities for so difficult a position. He is young and inexperienced, and lives in circumstances in which it would be difficult, in a short time, to acquire the necessary development of intellect, and especially of character. To this I must add, that, according to my knowledge of him, he takes little interest in politics.

'Under these circumstances one is doing enough, doing all, if one makes it possible for fate to find him, should she in her fancy of bringing unlikely things to pass, still insist on selecting him, notwithstanding all the difficulties in his way.'

'And this we have done, as far as lay in our power.'

'We have drawn the attention of Spain and England to this candidate, in the only manner in which, with a reasonable estimate of all the circumstances, it could be done. Espartero has neither declared

himself for, nor against it, but has very sensibly declared, that it is an affair which can only be decided by the Spanish Government, with the assistance and agreement of England, with a view to the true interests of the Spanish nation. We have already achieved thus much, that the present Ministry (Peel's), which at first wished for a Bourbon, because such a choice would involve the fewest difficulties, has become entirely impartial, and will loyally support any choice which is made in the true interests of Spain, and which promises success in this respect. So our seedcorn is laid in the earth, in a soil, it is true, in which, according to all appearance, it cannot spring up; but our part in the work, the possible, the only advisable part, is taken, and we must await the result with well considered submission.'

The year 1843 proved an important epoch in the question of the Spanish marriages. On the occasion of the visit of Queen Victoria and her husband to Eu, Louis Philippe and Guizot gave Lord Aberdeen, who accompanied the Queen, the most convincing assurances, that they not only were not seeking to obtain the hand of Isabella for one of the King's sons, but would decline any overtures on the subject.[1]

[1] Guizot, 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 145.

In the following year no decided advance was made. But when, in September 1845, the Queen and the Prince paid their second visit to Eu, further declarations were made, and an understanding was arrived at, from the meaning of which each party afterwards declared the other to have departed. It is therefore necessary to confront the various witnesses. In the first place, it must be noticed that these explanations were exchanged partly between Louis Philippe and Guizot on the one side, and Aberdeen on the other, and partly between the King and the Queen with Prince Albert; whether in different conversations, or whether all the various persons named were present at the same time, we are unable to say. It is well to observe a slight difference in the accounts, as, according to Louis Philippe in his letter of September 14, 1846, to his daughter the Queen of the Belgians,[1] it was Lord Aberdeen who, on that occasion, for the first time, and of his own accord, brought the marriage of the Infanta under discussion; whilst according to a memorandum of Stockmar's, it was Louis Philippe who took the initiative with Queen Victoria, in Eu, and spoke for the first time of the marriage.

With regard to the purport of the explanations

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 19–21.

exchanged, various witnesses agree in two principal points.

1. Louis Philippe and Guizot declared that the Duc de Montpensier should not marry the Infanta, till the Queen was married and had issue.

2. On the part of England, the promise was given that no prince not of the House of Bourbon, and particularly not Prince Leopold of Coburg, should be recognised and supported as the English candidate for the hand of the Queen of Spain.

On the other hand, the English and French versions differ from each other in the following particulars.

1. With regard to the first point, Louis Philippe maintains, in the letter quoted above, the agreement arrived at was, that the marriage of his son with the Infanta should not take place till the Queen was married and had had *a child* (quand elle aura eu un enfant),[1] whilst the English maintain the stipulation mentioned *children* (des enfants). We can easily remove this discrepancy, by confronting Louis Philippe's testimony with that of his own Minister, and with a memorandum of Stockmar's.

Guizot says,[2] that on September 19 (therefore, but a few days after Queen Victoria left Eu, and when

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 19.

[2] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 226.

everything must have still been fresh in his memory), he wrote to Bresson, the French Ambassador in Madrid, as follows:

'Tant qu'à défaut du mariage de la Reine, et d'enfants issus d'elle, le trône d'Espagne sera aussi suspendu au mariage de l'Infante, nous nous conduirons pour ce mariage comme pour celui de la Reine elle-même: nous n'y prétendrons pas pour un fils du Roi, et nous n'admettrons pas, qu'aucun autre qu'un prince de la maison de Bourbon y puisse être appelé. *Ni l'une ni l'autre des deux sœurs ne doit porter dans une autre maison la couronne d'Espagne.* Quand la Reine Isabelle sera mariée et aura *des enfants*, le mariage de l'Infante aura perdu le caractère qui nous impose envers l'un et l'autre la même politique; et dès-lors quelles que soient les chances inconnues d'un avenir lointain, ce mariage nous convient, et nous ne cachons point notre intention de le rechercher et de le conclure, s'il convient également aux premiers intéressés. J'ai dit cela à Lord Aberdeen. Le Roi le lui a dit et redit. Il est maintenant bien entendu que telle sera notre conduite. Et elle est trouvée fort sensée, naturelle et loyale.'

According to Stockmar's memorandum, Louis Philippe's words to the Queen were as follows:

'Qu'il ne penserait pas à cette union aussi long-

temps qu'elle serait une affaire politique, et pas avant que la Reine ne fût mariée et qu'elle n'eût *des enfants.*'

There can, therefore, be no reason for doubting, that in the first point under dispute, the English version is the correct one.

2. But the variations in the French and English reports, concerning the second declaration of the Agreement of Eu, are of far greater importance.

The English declare that they only bound themselves not to *acknowledge* and *support*, as the English candidate for the hand of the Queen, any Prince not a Bourbon, more especially Prince Leopold. On the other hand, the French afterwards, when the disputes over those agreements had already broken out, tried so to represent matters as if England had promised in Eu, to *take active measures to promote* the choice of a Bourbon, and to *oppose* the choice of any other Prince.

Guizot[1] wrote on July 30, 1846, to M. de Jarnac in London:

'Il a été dit et entendu que les deux gouvernements s'emploieraient à Madrid pour que le choix de la Reine se portât sur l'un des descendants de Phi-

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 297

lippe V. Lorsque quelqu'autre candidat a été mis en avant, Lord Aberdeen a travaillé à l'écarter.'

With the same object Count Jarnac assured Lord Palmerston,[1] the two Governments were so far in accord, that they would both *recommend* a descendant of Philippe V. as the consort of the Queen of Spain.

But we can prove in the most convincing manner from French documents, that by the Agreement of Eu England was only prevented from bringing forward and supporting as her own candidate, any prince not a Bourbon, but under no obligation to *oppose* any such choice, if made by any other party, or to employ *active* measures in favour of a Bourbon.

We will refer first to the letter, quoted above, from Louis Philippe to the Queen of the Belgians. Here the King reports that, after his concession that the marriage of the Infanta should only take place, 'quand la Reine serait mariée et aurait eu un enfant,' he spoke to Lord Aberdeen in the following terms:

'Mais pourtant il faut un peu de réciprocité dans cette affaire, et si je vous donne vos sécurités, il est juste qu'en retour vous me donniez les miennes. Or, les miennes sont que vous ferez ce que vous pourrez pour tâcher que ce soit parmi les descendants de

[1] Palmerston's Despatch of September 22, 1846, 'Correspondence relating to the Marriages,' p. 23.

Philippe V. que la Reine Isabelle choisisse son époux, et que la candidature du Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg soit écartée.'

To this Lord Aberdeen answered: 'Nous pensons comme vous que le mieux serait, que la Reine prît son époux parmi les descendants de Philippe V. Nous ne pouvons pas nous mettre en avant sur cette question, comme nous l'avons fait, mais nous vous laisserons faire; nous nous bornerons à vous suivre, et dans tous les cas à ne faire rien contre vous. Quant à la candidature du Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg, vous pouvez être tranquille sur ce point; je réponds qu'elle ne sera ni avouée, ni appuyée par l'Angleterre, et qu'elle ne vous gênera pas.'

The second testimony is that of Guizot, in his report to Bresson of the negotiations at Eu in 1845. After the extract already given above,[1] he continues: 'Il fut en même temps bien entendu et reconnu, par Lord Aberdeen comme par nous, qu'en tenant cette conduite nous comptions qu'aucun prince étranger à la maison de Bourbon ne serait soutenu par le gouvernement anglais, comme prétendant à la main de la Reine Isabelle, ou de l'Infante sa sœur.'[2]

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 227.

[2] We must just observe here that the concluding words of Guizot, 'ou de l'Infante sa sœur,' contain an error. There was

It cannot, therefore, be reasonably doubted that England at Eu never put herself under any obligation to actively promote the candidature of a Bourbon, or to determinately oppose any prince not a Bourbon, and we can, therefore, finally sum up the purport of the Agreement of Eu as follows:—

First, that France promised not to marry the Duke of Montpensier to the Infanta, till Queen Isabella was married and had children.

Secondly, that England promised not to bring forward and support any prince not a Bourbon, as a candidate for the hand of Isabella, and especially that the Court, as well as the Ministers, would not acknowledge and support Prince Leopold as the English candidate. This promise was most rigidly kept on the part of England. This will be considered in itself probable, after the facts we have brought together, as in England among those who had a voice in the matter from the first, none, or at most a very slight interest, free from all self-deception and prepossession, was taken in the Coburg candidature. One can have no doubt that those who undertook the obligations at Eu would keep to the letter of their given word, when one remembers the strict justice of

no idea in England, in 1845, that England should not favour any prince, not a Bourbon, as a suitor for the Infanta.

the Queen, the firm uprightness and prudence of the Prince, and the character of Lord Aberdeen, of whom Guizot agreed with Prince Albert in saying:[1] 'Lord Aberdeen est l'homme le plus complètement vertueux que je connaisse.'

On the French side, however, we perceive from this time an ostensibly excessive fear of the spectre of the Coburg candidature, and a constant endeavour to use this bugbear as an excuse for declaring themselves free from the promise given at Eu. As early as November, Guizot worked himself up into the greatest state of excitement[2] over the intelligence that Prince Leopold and his father intended to pay a visit to the elder brother in Portugal, and might possibly make an excursion into Spain. He was, however, silenced by energetic assurances on the part of Lord Aberdeen, that England had not the least intention of supporting or encouraging the pretensions of Prince Leopold, and that the Court entertained no designs on the hand of Queen Isabella, in favour of the Prince. 'Je puis vous répondre sur ma parole de gentleman,' said Lord Aberdeen, 'que vous n'avez rien à craindre de ce côté; le Prince Albert comprend parfaitement notre politique commune, et il s'y ralliera absolument, dans

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 278.

[2] Ibid. vol. viii. pp. 232–5.

la même mesure que le cabinet lui-même.' And Guizot adds: 'J'étais alors, et je reste aujourd'hui, profondément convaincu de la parfaite sincérité du Prince et du Ministre dans leurs intentions et leurs paroles.'

Nevertheless, the assurances of the virtuous Aberdeen could not quiet him. He maintained that from Lisbon constant intrigues were carried on in Madrid in favour of the Coburg, and that he mistrusted the members of the English embassy in Madrid. And it is certainly true that the English Minister, Sir Henry Bulwer, to whom Lord Aberdeen had so lately written, that he should in no way support the Coburg candidature,[1] was, from personal conviction, favourable to Prince Leopold, and we shall soon see that he could not prevail on himself to remain perfectly neutral. It is quite another question, which, after the final issue, we shall be able to answer in the negative, whether this involved any real danger of the success of the Coburg. One must never forget that a man is easily persuaded to consider as real, what he has an interest to see realised. Guizot was interested in persuading himself that there was great danger of the Coburg candidature, in order to justify to himself the non-fulfilment of the

[1] Guizot, 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 236.

engagement entered into with England. He therefore pictured to himself the case which might free him from this engagement, as more and more likely to arise, and assumed it to be such as, after the Agreement of Eu, *it certainly was not.* For his own purposes, he supposed that England had there engaged herself, which she had not, to take active measures against the Coburg candidature, not only as regarded the hand of the Queen, but of the Infanta. And thus, as early as December 10, 1845, he writes to the Minister Bresson, in Madrid: 'Plus j'y regarde, plus je demeure convaincu qu'il y a, en Espagne et autour de l'Espagne, un travail actif et incessant pour amener le mariage d'un Prince de Cobourg, soit avec la Reine, soit avec l'Infante. Le gouvernement anglais ne travaille pas positivement à ce mariage, mais il ne travaille pas non plus efficacement à l'empêcher. . . . Nous ne pouvons jouer en ceci un rôle de dupes. Nous continuerons à suivre loyalement notre politique, c'est-à-dire, à écarter toute combinaison qui pourrait rallumer le conflit entre la France et l'Angleterre à propos de l'Espagne. Mais si nous nous apercevions que de l'autre côté on n'est pas aussi net et aussi décidé que nous, si, par exemple, soit par l'inertie du gouvernement anglais, soit par le fait de ses amis en Espagne et autour de l'Espagne, un mariage se

préparait pour la Reine ou pour l'Infante, qui mît en péril notre principe—les descendants de Philippe V—et si cette combinaison avait, auprès du gouvernement espagnol, des chances de succès, aussitôt nous nous mettrions en avant sans réserve, et nous demanderions simplement et hautement la préférence pour M. le Duc de Montpensier.'

In this manner it was made more easy to find the pretext that was wanted. Even the absence of energetic measures on the part of the English Government, even the acts of her friends in or about Spain, were sufficient causes, according to Guizot, for freeing France from her obligations.

After he had devised this stratagem for himself, and laid it before his agents in Madrid, he resolved in March 1846 to explain it to Lord Aberdeen, so that the latter should not be able to say that he had been taken by surprise, if some day the trap closed upon him. He therefore sent the Memorandum of February 27, 1846, to London, that the Ambassador, St.-Aulaire, might read it to Lord Aberdeen. At the same time he wrote to St.-Aulaire:—

'Je tiens également à être loyal et à n'être point dupe.' What is meant by 'n'être point dupe'?—to get his own way? But it is not always possible to get one's own way, and at the same time to remain perfectly loyal.

The memorandum says:[1]—

'Un travail très-actif se poursuit et redouble en ce moment pour marier le Prince Léopold de Cobourg soit à la Reine Isabelle, soit à l'Infante Doña Fernanda. La cour de Lisbonne est le foyer de ce travail. Les correspondances, les journaux portugais et espagnols le relèvent évidemment. . . . Nous avons été et nous voulons être très-fidèles à la politique que nous avons adoptée et aux engagements que nous avons pris quant aux mariages, soit de la Reine Isabelle, soit de l'Infante Doña Fernanda. Mais si l'état actuel des choses se prolonge et se développe, nous pouvons arriver brusquement à une situation où nous serons :

'1. Placés sous l'empire d'une nécessité absolue pour empêcher que, par le mariage, soit de la Reine, soit de l'Infante, notre politique reçoive en Espagne un échec que nous n'accepterions pas.

'2. Libres, pour l'un comme pour l'autre mariage, de tout engagement.

'C'est ce qui arriverait si le mariage, soit de la Reine, soit de l'Infante, avec le Prince Léopold de Cobourg, ou tout autre prince étranger aux descendants de Philippe V, devenait probable et imminent.

'Dans ce cas nous serions affranchis de tout engage-

[1] Guizot, 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 253.

ment et libres d'agir immédiatement pour parer le coup en demandant la main, soit de la Reine, soit de l'Infante, pour M. le Duc de Montpensier.'

So here we find, as clearly as we could desire, this monstrous definition of the Agreement of Eu, which was necessary to prepare the way for France, to free herself from her obligations. England had undertaken at Eu not to acknowledge and support as her candidate for the hand of Isabella, any prince not of the house of Bourbon, and, more especially, not Prince Leopold. If she did so, France could declare herself free from her counter-obligations. But this memorandum declares, that France would be already freed from her obligations, if any marriage, either for the Queen or for the Infanta, other than with a Bourbon prince, appeared probable or imminent, naturally reserving for the French Government the decision when this case should have arisen. What did Lord Aberdeen say to this? Guizot tells us nothing on this point. In fact, from a memorandum of Stockmar's which we give below, Aberdeen seems to have said very little, and to have played the part of the ostrich to perfection.

'St.-Aulaire read the document to him. But as nobody knew better than himself (Aberdeen) that the English Cabinet had done nothing "qui rendrait pro-

bable ou imminent le mariage, soit de la Reine, soit de l'Infante, avec le Prince de Cobourg ou avec tout autre prince étranger aux descendants de Philippe V," he saw nothing in the contents of the memorandum but the exaggerated fears and suspicions of the French Government, which he easily accounted for by the various reports, then in general circulation, about the Spanish marriages. He therefore took as little notice as he could of the communication. He wished to lay as little stress as possible on its purport, as he thus spared himself the necessity of observing, how France in this document, in addition to her former pretensions, added a new and monstrous one, by declaring herself free from her obligations, through a possibility gratuitously assumed by herself. He therefore was satisfied with declaring, that on the part of England, nothing had happened, nor ever would happen, that could justify the suspicions and anxiety of France; and concluded by requesting St.-Aulaire would endeavour to reassure his Government at home. In order to give no further importance to the whole affair, he kept no copy of St.-Aulaire's communication, so that when Palmerston came into office later, nothing was found in the official records bearing on the question.' We see, then, that the upright, good-natured Aberdeen was no match for his opponents. He kept silence as to

the groundless suppositions of the French communication, in order to avoid the necessity of making disagreeable comments on it to the French Government. His only endeavour was to reassure them, and he considered it prudent to wipe out all trace of the memorandum, as he never even kept a copy of it. Surely this is burying his head in the sand like the ostrich.

He ought to have said: 'This document displays suspicions injurious to us. We feel so confident of not deserving such suspicions, that your want of confidence rouses ours. This feeling is increased by the wrong interpretation you give in many points to the interview at Eu, building thereon most unjustifiable pretensions, which I must decidedly decline to acknowledge.'

Remarkably enough, it happened that soon afterwards, in May 1846, a circumstance arose which Guizot, according to the threats in his letter of February 27, might have used as an excuse for withdrawing from the obligations of Eu, had he not been prevented by the evident, one might say flagrant, loyalty of the English Cabinet.

We will leave Louis Philippe to describe this episode.

'Toutes ces manœuvres,' he writes, in the letter we

have so often quoted, to his daughter, the Queen of the Belgians (he means the pretended manœuvres of the English agents), 'amenèrent la démarche à laquelle la Reine Christine se laissa entraîner, en expédiant un agent secret, porteur d'une lettre d'elle pour le Duc de Cobourg, à l'effet de lui demander la main de son cousin, le Prince Léopold de Saxe-Cobourg, pour la Reine sa fille.

'La loyauté de Lord Aberdeen le porta à nous donner immédiatement connaissance de cette démarche qui nous avait été cachée à Madrid, et il y ajouta l'assurance que ni la Reine Victoria, ni le Prince Albert, ni le gouvernement de S. M., ne donneraient ni appui ni encouragement quelconque à la demande de la Reine Christine. Nous lui représentâmes que, d'après ce qui s'était passé entre nous sur ce chapitre, nous avions droit de réclamer de lui une répression plus positive de la part que des agents anglais[1] avaient prises aux intrigues qui avaient amené cette démarche de la Reine Christine; et en effet Lord Aberdeen adressa une sévère réprimande à Mr. Bulwer.'

[1] Guizot relates more accurately (Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 260) that the communication to the Duke of Coburg had been arranged with, or at all events imparted to, Sir Henry Bulwer, and he had approved of it.

'Sir Henry Bulwer,' says Guizot,[1] 'offrit sa démission, mais les circonstances générales devinrent telles que ni le blâme ni la démission n'eurent aucune suite.' These circumstances were the retirement, already for some time expected, of the Tory Ministry and of Lord Aberdeen, whose place under the Whigs was filled, June 29, by Lord Palmerston.

If we accept the French version of this affair as the correct one, it is evident that the rapid, and throughout open and honourable proceedings of Lord Aberdeen, made it impossible for the French, even if they wished it, to take advantage of the circumstance, in the sense of the memorandum of February 27.

But, according to Stockmar's notes, the English Government, from the accounts they received, arrived a few months later at the conclusion that Aberdeen had not only prevented France from seizing a good opportunity, but had spoilt a craftily laid plan on their part. Stockmar writes on November 27:—

'The reports from Paris make out that the overtures of Queen Christine to the Duke of Coburg, were a step devised by her with Louis Philippe, and a trap for Bulwer and the English Government.

'Had the latter fallen into it, they would have given

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 273.

Louis Philippe a pretext for saying, with an appearance of justice: "As you have swerved from your part of the agreement, I am justified in trying to effect the marriage with one of my sons."

'The Prussian Minister in Lisbon also informed his Government that the letter of Queen Christine to the Duke of Coburg was only a feint, to draw out an expression of opinion on the part of England. Had England pronounced in favour of the marriage, the French would have used this as an excuse for declaring themselves free from the Agreement of Eu.'

Lord Palmerston's entrance into office brought perfectly fresh elements into the question of the Spanish marriages. Lord Palmerston was, from the time of the oriental complications of 1840–41, looked on in France with disfavour. Guizot and Louis Philippe considered him quarrelsome, and inclined to oppose the influence and wishes of France everywhere. Guizot at once prepared himself for a conflict; he wrote to Bresson as early as July 5, 1846:[1] 'J'ai avec Lord Palmerston cet avantage, que s'il survenait entre nous et Londres quelque refroidissement, quelqu' embarras, ce serait à lui, et non à moi, qu'en France,

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 287.

en Angleterre, partout, on en imputerait la faute. Je le lui ai dit à lui-même, il y a trois mois.'

Palmerston, on his part, had from the first felt that it would be very difficult to maintain the *entente cordiale* with France. St.-Aulaire reports, on the authority of Lord Aberdeen, that Lord Palmerston had said to the latter: 'Ces gens-là sont essentiellement envahisseurs, agressifs, provoquants; en toute affaire ils veulent se faire une bonne part, aux dépens des autres. Comment bien vivre avec eux, à de telles conditions?'

It is an old experience that people who distrust each other, and foresee the probability of quarreling, seldom behave properly towards each other, and in consequence generally end by a real conflict. This was the case with the English and French Governments.

With regard to Spain itself, the whole aspect of affairs was altered by Lord Palmerston's accession to office.

'Vous tirerez,' says Guizot, in the same letter to Bresson, 'à coup sûr, grand parti de son avénement pour agir sur la Reine Christine et son mari. Ils auraient beau faire; ils n'auront jamais dans Lord Palmerston qu'un ennemi, car il ne sera jamais que le

patron du parti progressiste, c'est-à-dire de leurs ennemis.'

And this applied, of course, equally to the Moderados, the party who, since the fall of Espartero in 1843, had been at the head of affairs.

It is true that the first preliminary interviews of the French Ambassador with Lord Palmerston, touching the Spanish question, gave hopes that the two Governments would act together, as they were both agreed that it would be best for Queen Isabella to choose one of her cousins, the sons of Don Francisco de Paula, that is, either Don Francisco, Duke of Cadiz, or Don Enrique, Duke of Seville. But even under this apparent accord a difference arose, as France preferred the harmless and innocent Don Francisco, and England the restless Don Enrique, who was connected with the Progressists, and whom Lord Aberdeen, in one of his last despatches to Spain, of June 22,[1] had mentioned as the candidate who appeared the most eligible to the English Government, as he seemed to have the best chance of being acceptable to the Spanish people. France, on her part, entirely disregarded the difficulties with regard to Don Francisco, which appear in a private

[1] 'Correspondence relating to the Marriages,' p. 6.

letter from Bresson to Guizot of July 12, 1846.[1] Bresson had proposed the Duke of Cadiz to Queen Christine as the husband of her daughter Isabella. This marriage could be easily and quickly brought about. 'Sa Majesté,' he says, 'en est tombée d'accord, et elle le verrait s'accomplir sans aucune répugnance, si la Reine sa fille ne témoignait pour ce prince un éloignement aussi prononcé, et s'il n'était douteux qu'il fût homme.'[2]

England, on her part, thought it possible to overcome the objections brought forward against Don Enrique. Bresson, in the same letter, says of the Queen-mother: 'Pour Don Enrique elle, ne s'occupe pas de ses extravagances politiques; elle le sait mauvais, pervers, perdu de mœurs; ses devoirs de mère l'obligent à le repousser.'

But it was not the mere question of the choice between Don Francisco et Don Enrique, which led to the final issue of this affair between England and France. We must rather seek the cause in the general feeling of mistrust in the French Cabinet

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 181.

[2] Louis Philippe, in the letter to his daughter so often already quoted, says: 'Il me paraît certain, d'après les informations, même très-minutieuses, qui ont été recueillies à Madrid sur Don François d'Assise, qu'il se trouve dans une bonne condition de virilité.'

towards Palmerston, which, joined to his own mistakes and hastiness, gave strength to the impulse, already felt in France, to play the game hinted at in the memorandum of February 27, though not then quite determined on.

Lord Palmerston made the first fatal mistake in his despatch to Bulwer of July 19, 1846;[1] a document from which, on account of its influence on the whole question, we must give various extracts.

Viscount Palmerston to Mr. Bulwer.

'Foreign Office, July 19, 1846.

'There seem to be two questions, which at the present moment prominently attract the attention of those, who take an interest in the affairs of Spain. The one is the marriage of the Queen, the other is the political condition of the country.

'In regard to the first question, I have not at present any instructions to give you, in addition to those which you have received from my predecessor in office. The British Government is not prepared to give any active support to the pretensions of any of the princes who are now candidates for the Queen of

[1] 'Correspondence,' p. 8.

Spain's hand, and does not feel itself called upon to make any objection to any of them.

'The choice of a husband for the Queen of an independent country is obviously a matter with which the Governments of other countries are not entitled to interfere, unless there should be a probability that the choice would fall upon some prince so directly belonging to the reigning family of some powerful foreign State, that he would be likely to connect the policy of the country of his adoption with the policy of the country of his birth, in a manner that would be injurious to the balance of power, and dangerous to the interests of other States. But there is no person of this description among those who are now named as candidates for the hand of the Queen of Spain; those candidates being reduced to three, namely, the Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and the two sons of Don Francisco de Paula. I omit Count Trapani and Count Montemolin, as there appears to be no chance of the choice falling upon either of them. As between the three candidates above mentioned, Her Majesty's Government have only to express their sincere wish that the choice may fall upon the one who may be most likely to secure the happiness of the Queen, and to promote the welfare of the Spanish nation.'

The despatch then goes on to the second point, the political condition of Spain; it characterises the system of Government as one of absolutism, force and a mock constitutionalism, even of grinding tyranny; and expresses a hope that the Spanish Ministry may at once return to a constitutional and lawful form of government, and ends with the following words:—

'Her Majesty's Government are so sensible of the inconvenience of interfering, even by friendly advice, in the internal affairs of independent States, that I have to abstain from giving you instructions to make any representations whatever to the Spanish Ministers on these matters; but though you will of course take care to express on no occasion on these subjects sentiments different from those which I have thus explained to you, and although you will be careful not to express those sentiments in any manner or upon any occasion so as to be likely to create, increase, or encourage discontent, yet you need not conceal from any of those persons who may have the power of remedying the existing evils, the fact that such opinions are entertained by the British Government.'

It is impossible to discover in this despatch, any inclination on the English side to repudiate the

Agreement of Eu, though the French pretended to do so, in order to free themselves from the obligations they there undertook. Still it cannot be denied that it is in several points imprudent and impolitic.

Lord Palmerston first refers Bulwer to the last instructions sent to him by Lord Aberdeen. These were contained in the letter of June 25, already mentioned, in which the Minister sends to the Ambassador a copy of a letter of the 22nd inst., which he had addressed to the Duke of Satomayor, in answer to a question from the Spanish Government, as to how England would regard the choice of a prince, not of the house of Bourbon, as husband of the Queen Isabella.

In this letter Lord Aberdeen says: 'We have always denied and still deny, the right or pretension of the French Government to impose a member of any family upon the Spanish nation as the husband of the Queen, or to control in any manner the decision of a question so purely Spanish. But we have felt and readily admitted that there might be various reasons which should induce the Spanish Government preferably to select from the house of Bourbon a prince for this station. We therefore urged no objection against the proposal of seeking

among the descendants of Philip V. for a husband for the Queen, provided such choice should be conformable to the inclinations of Her Majesty and the interests of her Government.

'We ventured,' he continues further on, 'although without any English candidate or English preference, to point out the Infant Don Enrique as the prince who appeared to us the most eligible, because the most likely to prove acceptable to the people of Spain.'

Thus the direction given by his predecessor was confirmed by Lord Palmerston—that England had no candidate, no especial preference, but with a view to the interests of Spain considered Don Enrique as the most eligible. Lord Palmerston, too, repeats most distinctly, that the English Government was not prepared to give any active support to any of the princes named as candidates, and also did not feel itself called upon to make any objection to any of them.

If we remember that in the conference at Eu, England only undertook not to bring forward, acknowledge, or assist any prince not of the house of Bourbon, it is not possible to find in the document in question any departure from that obligation.

The despatch certainly says further on, 'those who are now named as candidates for the hand of the

Queen of Spain,' and mentions as such Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, and the two sons of Don Francisco de Paula. But this mention of Prince Leopold only gave expression to the well-known fact, that direct steps had been taken by Spain to place him among the candidates. The mere mention of him as a candidate could in no way make him the English candidate. And though in conclusion, Lord Palmerston expressed the wish, that the choice might fall on the one of the three candidates who was the most likely to secure the happiness of the Queen, and to promote the welfare of the Spanish nation, in placing the Coburg prince in this respect on a footing with the other two candidates, there could be no departure from the Agreement of Eu. For as we have seen before, England never engaged at Eu to give active support to a Bourbon candidate, or take active measures against any non-Bourbon prince. Also this placing of the three princes on the same footing was but apparent, as Lord Palmerston referred to Lord Aberdeen's instructions, in which Don Enrique was spoken of as the most eligible candidate as regarded the interests of Spain.

But though Lord Palmerston's despatch in no way departed from the Agreement of Eu, it is impossible to deny that in more than one point it was incon-

siderate and impolitic. In the first place, why mention the Coburg prince at all as a candidate, against whom England had as little to object as against the other two candidates; when Palmerston himself on one hand did not really wish for him, but, on the other hand, knew that the mere name, whether with or without cause, would excite France?

But, secondly, the violent attack in the despatch on the domestic policy of the Spanish Government, was unwise in two respects. Unwise in general, because Palmerston's manner of magisterially reading other Governments a lesson on their domestic policy, could only tend to make England and her Minister hated. Unwise more especially in regard to the question of the marriages. Let us see what Guizot says:[1] 'Ce furent l'attitude et la dépêche de Lord Palmerston, à peine rentré au pouvoir, qui surmontèrent le peu de goût de la Reine Christine pour les fils de sa sœur Doña Carlotta [Francisco and Enrique] et déterminèrent sa prompte et franche résolution en faveur des deux mariages Bourbons. Soit légèreté, soit routine dans la vieille politique anglaise, Lord Palmerston avait mal jugé de l'état des partis et des esprits en Espagne; les modérés étaient en possession

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 306.

du gouvernement. . . . . C'était dans cette forte et régulière situation que la Reine Christine, le cabinet, et tout le parti modéré en Espagne se voyaient menacés d'être livrés à leurs constants et ardents ennemis, les Progressistes révolutionnaires. Ils ne voulurent pas subir cette perspective, et ils se décidèrent enfin nettement pour l'alliance française.'

The despatch of Lord Palmerston of July 19, hastened the process already begun on the French side, of freeing themselves from the Agréement of Eu.

Already, on July 5, a few days after Lord Palmerston's entry into office, Guizot had written to Bresson at Madrid:[1] 'Don Enrique est dans notre principe, car il est un des descendants de Philippe V. . . . Mais évidemment le Duc de Cadix est fort préférable, en soi et pour nous. Poussez donc décidément à lui, et placez le Duc de Montpensier à côté de lui.'

This intimation fell on most fruitful ground. Bresson, who was full of activity, and cared for nothing so much as to carry out the secret wishes of his Court and its Ministers, and who willingly anticipated such wishes, wrote, as early as July 12,[2] that he had disclosed to Queen Christine 'que le Roi (Louis Philippe) était disposé à consentir que dans toute

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 286.

[2] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 180.

combinaison Bourbon M. le Duc de Montpensier prît place à côte du mari de la Reine ; c'est-à-dire, que les deux mariages, si l'un devait faciliter l'autre, se célébrassent ou fussent 'du moins déclarés simultanément,' and at the same time proposed Don Francisco for the Queen. On the following day he reports triumphantly that Christine would accept both his proposals.[1] Any scruples with which this proceeding might have inspired Guizot, with regard to his former engagements with England, were anticipated by Bresson with the observation, 'Dégagé, affranchi, vous l'êtes mille fois par les procédés des agents anglais.'

But when the report of this transaction of Bresson's reached Paris, Louis Philippe, who at once saw all it entailed, was frightened. 'Plus nous avons de mauvaise foi à craindre,' he writes to Guizot, July 25,[2] 'plus il importe que les cartes que nous avons en main soient nettes,' and he repeatedly and expressly demands of Guizot, that he should formally disavow Bresson's offer, as regarded 'la simultanéité et la conclusion définitive des mariages avant la discussion des articles.'[3]

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[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 181.

[2] Ibid. p. 185

[3] See 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. pp. 182, 184.

Guizot acknowledges in his answer to the King,[1] that Bresson had exceeded his instructions, but maintains that he had not gone so far as the King imagined. 'Il n'a jamais pu entendre ni dire que le mariage de Monseigneur le Prince de Montpensier serait conclu, célébré, ou même définitivement arrêté en même temps que celui de la Reine. . . . Si le mariage de la Reine avec le Duc de Cadix était une fois arrêté, on traiterait alors définitivement du mariage de Monseigneur le Duc de Montpensier avec l'Infante; c'est-à-dire qu'on en annoncerait l'intention réciproque et qu'on en discuterait les conditions et les termes. C'est sur ce terrain, je pense, que nous devons nous tenir.'

According to Guizot's plan, therefore, the marriage with Montpensier was to be arranged in the meantime secretly, but the reciprocal agreement to be declared, the conditions to be discussed, and the formal definite decision to be made, only when the marriage of the Queen with the Duke of Cadiz was an established fact. Louis Philippe then declared himself satisfied with the modification, that the marriage of the Queen should have first taken place.[2] Bresson had tried to push matters forward, and Louis Philippe at first had conscientious scruples which Guizot tried to

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 182.

[2] Letter of July 24. Ibid. p. 184.

smooth away for him. This was the state of affairs when Lord Palmerston's despatch of July 19 reached Paris.

Guizot wrote at once to Bresson:[1] 'Vous pouvez, je pense, lier toujours ces deux noms (Cadix et Montpensier) sans engagement formel de simultanéité dans la conclusion définitive et en réservant la discussion des articles;' and the next day, July 25,[2] he told the King, the present moment was not the right one for disavowing Bresson, on account of his former misdeed.

After France had once advanced so far as to contemplate the possibility of the marriages taking place at the same time, and yet not to formally promise them, it did not require much to bring about the understanding, that both the betrothals and the marriages should really take place together.

It was the impression produced in Madrid by Palmerston's despatch of July 19, which gave the slight impulse still wanting.

Bresson wrote on the 8th August,[3] that the Queen-Mother, Christine, had said with great agitation to her Minister, Mon, 'Engage donc Bresson à s'entendre avec moi pour faire les deux mariages Bourbon le

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 301.
[2] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 186.
[3] Guizot, 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 303.

plus tôt possible. Les Anglais et la révolution nous menacent.' On the following day she told him herself that she was determined on the Cadiz alliance. 'Elle ne nous demande qu'une concession : c'est d'associer le mariage de M. le Duc de Montpensier à celui de M. le Duc de Cadix, de manière à fortifier, à relever l'un par l'autre, et à contenir les malcontents, les opposants, par l'éclat du rang de notre Prince, et par la crainte de la France, qui vient derrière lui.'

On the 28th the two marriages were announced to the council of Ministers at Madrid, and the act of betrothal for Montpensier was signed.

On the 1st September Guizot commissioned Count Jarnac to inform Lord Palmerston of what had happened, and, referring him to the memorandum of February 27th, to declare, that the step taken by Queen Christine in May, with the knowledge of Bulwer, taken together with Lord Palmerston's despatch of July 19th, had really brought about the case foreseen in that memorandum, of a 'chance probable et imminente d'un mariage de la Reine d'Espagne avec le Prince Léopold de Cobourg,' and that France was therefore free from the obligations of Eu.[1]

After all the facts we have mentioned, it is un-

[1] Guizot, 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 316.

necessary to prove the monstrosity of this assertion. We will only particularise two points: first, that Guizot in referring to what had happened in May, is silent on the most important fact, that it was through Lord Aberdeen he received the first intimation of Queen Christine's letter. Secondly, that from the correspondence published in the 'Revue rétrospective' it is very evident, that the French themselves never really believed there was any danger of the Coburg candidature. We will give a few passages.

On the 12th July Bresson writes to Guizot:[1] 'Il n'y a plus de danger imminent du Cobourg. M. Mon continue de m'assurer qu'on n'a reçu encore aucune réponse de la famille.' And farther on: 'Bulwer ne pense pas que près de Palmerston le Cobourg soit très en faveur.'

On the 16th July Louis Philippe wrote to Guizot:[2] 'Quant aux Cobourgs. . . . j'ai lieu de croire, et vous pouvez le mander (mais très-confidentiellement) à Bresson, que leur intention est de ne rien répondre aux ouvertures que la Reine Christine leur a faites.'

On the 24th July, after the news of Palmerston's despatch of July 19th had been received in Paris,

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 181.
[2] Ibid. p. 180.

Guizot wrote to the King:[1] 'Je ne serais pas étonné qu'au fond il (Palmerston) ne se souciât pas beaucoup du Cobourg, et se proposât surtout de reprendre en Espagne le patronage du parti progressiste.'

On the 31st July, Guizot informs the King:[2] 'J'ai dîné hier avec William Hervey [of the English Embassy in Paris], et soit ses paroles, soit les lettres qu'il m'a montrées, me portent vraiment à penser qu'il n'y a dans le cabinet anglais, ni dans Lord Palmerston lui-même, point de projet sérieux pour un Cobourg, qu'au fond ils n'en veulent pas; qu'ils ont fait acte de flatterie envers le Prince Albert, et qu'ils se retrancheront volontiers derrière notre résistance.' On the 8th August the Minister writes to Louis Philippe:[3] 'Je n'ajoute qu'un renseignement qui me vient ce matin de Londres et de très-bonne source. "Vous pouvez dormir fort tranquille sur le Cobourg. Point de Cobourg possible. Palmerston à eu sur ce point un entretien intime avec la Reine, le Prince Albert, et le Roi Léopold à la fois. Il a été décidé par la Reine, que tant qu'il y avait un prince espagnol possible, elle ne songerait pas au Cobourg, et que s'il n'y avait plus d'Espagnol possible, elle n'y songerait pas d'avantage, tant que la France s'opposerait à un Cobourg." Je suis enclin à croire cela

[1] 'Mémoires,' vol. viii. p. 184. [2] Ibid. p. 196. [3] Ibid. p. 197.

vrai.' In conclusion we must mention that Lord Aberdeen, who was so highly esteemed by Guizot for his uprightness and just feeling towards France, and to whom Guizot on the 7th September explained the whole question in dispute, sending him the necessary documents, in a letter to Guizot of September 14 thus expresses his opinion on the important point: 'I have no reason to believe that the English Government have ever adopted any other views (than his, Aberdeen's). I see nothing in the correspondence you have sent me to justify such a belief.'[1] And,[2] 'I confess, my dear M. Guizot, that I am at a loss to perceive an adequate ground for the change which has taken place' (viz. in the French policy).

And in fact Guizot's manner to the English Government, and that of Louis Philippe to the English Court, after the announcement of the Spanish marriages, bore all the impression of a bad conscience.

On the 1st September Guizot had an interview with Lord Normanby, the English Ambassador, and informed him that the marriage of the Queen of Spain with Don Francisco was definitively settled. He added, that the Queen would at the same time give her consent to the marriage of her sister with the Duke

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 325.

[2] Ibid. p. 327.

of Montpensier. 'At the same time?' exclaimed Normanby. 'Not at the same time,' answered Guizot; 'the marriage will not take place at the same time.' Two days afterwards the English Ambassador showed him the report he had prepared of this conversation, for the English Government, to ascertain its accuracy.

Guizot said nothing as to any inaccuracy in the words we have attributed to him in the account given above. However, on the 24th September, when Normanby reminded him of them, he at first disclaimed them, but afterwards admitted he had said something of the kind, but had only meant that the marriage of the Queen would take place first,—she would be given away first. When an eminent man, in such a position as Guizot's, condescends to such subterfuges, his case must be a very bad one.

Louis Philippe's embarrassment was shown to the English Court in a different, but not less significant way. We must remember how he had for years endeavoured to strengthen the *entente cordiale* with England, by a personal bond of friendship with the highest personages there. We will give some striking extracts from the correspondence of the years 1844–46, printed in the 'Revue rétrospective,' a correspondence which the editor, in p. 81, introduces with the following words:—

'On verra des communications, d'abord affectueuses, prendre un ton de dévouement de plus en plus passionné à mesure qu'on approche du moment où le désaccord doit éclater. C'est pour la première fois au premier jour de l'année, où précisément Louis-Philippe doit s'exposer au reproche de duplicité de la part de la Reine d'Angleterre, qu'il envoie poupée et fusil à ses enfants, et qu'il établit une correspondance avec ces augustes bambins.' On the 15th October 1844, after the first visit to Eu, Louis Philippe closes a letter to Queen Victoria with the following words:—

'J'espère que vous me permettrez d'offrir ici de nouveau au Prince Albert l'expression de ma vive amitié, et celle de tous les sentiments, dont le temps que nous venons de passer ensemble m'a pénétré pour lui. J'y ajoute, du fond de mon cœur, les mêmes expressions pour Elle-même; il m'est plus facile d'appeler au sien pour apprécier les sentiments que je lui porte, que d'entreprendre de les exprimer; et je me borne donc à lui répéter que c'est pour la vie, Madame, que je suis,' &c.

He sends a letter of October 20, 1844, with 'l'expression de cette vive, sincère, et bien tendre amitié.'

On the 11th February 1845, he writes to the Queen about a passage in her speech at the opening of Parliament:—

'J'ai cru entendre votre voix, et j'ai senti que votre speech, comme le mien, n'était pas seulement l'expression de cette saine politique qui nous anime ainsi que nos gouvernements, pour consolider en la proclamant l'heureux accord de nos couronnes, mais que cette expression était aussi celle de l'affection et de l'amitié personnelle des deux souverains, et que cela partait du cœur.'

In a letter of October 6, 1845, he rises as high as the expression 'amitié éternelle.' And to Princess Victoria, then six years old, he writes on the 27th January, 1846: 'Votre excellente petite lettre m'a fait le plus grand plaisir, et je suis bien aise d'avoir déjà reçu de vous un témoignage de cette précieuse affection que me portent vos augustes parents, et que j'éprouve si vivement pour eux.' He ends with the assurance: 'que je vous aime tous bien tendrement et que je prends la liberté de vous embrasser tous et toutes en qualité de votre vieux cousin.'

The same phrases as to the *entente cordiale* between the Governments, and the personal affection of the highest personages, are again repeated in the letters to the Queen of January and May 1846, printed in the same work.

Louis Philippe having adopted this tone of devoted friendship towards the English Court, he must have

found himself in a dilemma, when it was necessary to send to the Queen the news, that at the same time that the Queen Isabella was betrothed, the Infanta was engaged to his son Montpensier—that, in fact, he had broken the promise he had personally given her.

The wisest, most courageous, and most upright line would have been to acknowledge this to the Queen, thus seizing the initiative in order to come to an understanding with her. Politically, there were not wanting justifications, which, at all events, in the eyes of the French were proof. Instead of this, the King chose a way of escape which must make him appear to all parties in the most unfavourable light; namely, that of acting as if nothing had happened.

He induced his good Queen, Marie Amélie, to communicate the event to Queen Victoria in the following letter, which is printed [1] (apparently after the rough copy, but with different variations and omissions as compared with the original):

'8 Septembre 1846.

'Madame,—Confiante dans cette précieuse [2] amitié, dont Votre Majesté nous a donné tant de preuves, et

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 116

[2] In the 'Revue rétrospective' it is 'bonne.'

dans l'aimable intérêt que vous avez toujours témoigné à tous nos enfants, je m'empresse de vous annoncer la conclusion du mariage[1] de notre fils Montpensier avec l'Infante Louise-Fernande. Cet événement de famille nous comble de joie, parce que nous espérons[2] qu'il assurera le bonheur de notre fils chéri, et que nous retrouverons dans l'Infante une fille de plus,[3] aussi bonne, aussi aimable que ses aînées, et qui ajoutera à notre bonheur intérieur, le seul vrai dans ce monde, et que vous, Madame, savez si bien apprécier. Je vous demande d'avance votre amitié pour notre nouvelle enfant, sûre qu'elle partagera tous les sentiments de dévouement et d'affection de nous tous pour vous, pour le Prince Albert, et pour votre chère famille.[4] Le Roi me charge de vous offrir ses tendres et respectueux hommages, ainsi que ses amitiés au Prince Albert. Il espère que vous aurez reçu ses lettres, et que les pêches soient arrivées à bon port. Tous mes enfants me chargent aussi de vous offrir leurs hommages, veuillez offrir mes amitiés au Prince Albert; embrassez pour moi vos si chers enfans, et

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[1] An incorrect expression, as the marriages only took place on October 10.

[2] 'Revue rétrospective,' 'j'espère.'

[3] Ibid. 'nouvelle fille.'

[4] What follows is omitted in the 'Revue rétrospective.'

recevez l'expression de la tendre et inaltérable amitié avec laquelle je suis,

'Madame,

'de Votre Majesté

'la toute dévouée Sœur et Amie,

'MARIE-AMÉLIE.'

The impression made by this letter at the English Court is shown in a letter from Stockmar of November 10, 1846: 'How has Louis Philippe behaved to Queen Victoria, he, who till now, has prided himself on knowing how to unite the requirements of the age and of his kingdom of 1830, with the traditional Bourbon pride and old French knightly gallantry? He entirely forgets that as soon as he had himself, and of his own free will, spoken to the Queen of England about the marriage of his son with the Infanta, and had also of his own free will given a promise on the subject, he had entered into a double engagement, first, to the Government, then to the Queen. If he wished to free himself from this engagement, he should have explained himself to the Government through the channels of diplomacy, and at the same time, or, better still, beforehand, personally to the Queen as a gentleman to a lady, in the way of knightly courtesy. And how did he perform his personal obligations to

the Queen? His wife had to inform the Queen, without any preliminaries, of the Montpensier marriage, as a purely accidental, unforeseen, but most fortunate event, of which the Queen of England could not have heard or guessed, and which would be doubtless a most agreeable surprise for her. And to keep up the semblance of perfect ease and innocence, the French Queen, at the close of her letter, asks about the arrival of two dozen peaches, which the King had sent as a present. Anyone, not knowing that such a composition was the effect of extreme embarrassment, which blunted all delicacy of feeling, would see in it an intentional insult. The affected reference to the increase of domestic happiness 'le seul vrai dans ce monde,' through this marriage of such eminent political importance, was in the same style, and had the fault of parading an innocence which could not be taken as real without an uncommon degree of *naïveté*, to presuppose which in the opposite party, must wound all the more deeply.

The attitude therefore assumed by Louis Philippe towards the English Court, after the betrothal of Montpensier, was a most unfortunate one. But apart from this, the English Sovereign and her husband felt much wounded in the whole matter, and that by a prince whom they had considered as their friend, and

for whom they had given up their own wish (Coburg candidate) and who had not only broken his given word, but had entirely deceived them.

The answer of Queen Victoria to Queen Marie Amélie gave but measured expression to these feelings. It runs (with certain corrections of the copy, as in the 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 116), as follows.

'Osborne : 10 Septembre 1846.

'Madame,—Je viens de recevoir la lettre de Votre Majesté du 8 de ce mois, et je m'empresse de Vous en remercier. Vous vous souviendrez peut-être de ce qui s'est passé à Eu entre le Roi et moi : Vous connaissez l'importance que j'ai toujours attachée au maintien de notre entente cordiale, et le zèle avec lequel j'y ai travaillé. Vous avez appris, sans doute, que nous nous sommes refusés à [1] arranger le mariage entre la Reine d'Espagne et notre Cousin Léopold (que les deux Reines avaient désiré vivement), dans le [2] seul but de ne pas nous éloigner d'une marche qui serait plus agréable à Votre Roi,[3] quoique nous ne pouvions considérer cette marche comme la meilleure. Vous pouvez donc aisément comprendre que l'an-

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' 'd'arranger.'
[2] Ibid. 'ce.'
[3] Ibid. 'au roi,'

nonce soudaine de ce *double mariage* ne pouvait nous causer que de la surprise et un bien vif regret.

'Je vous demande bien pardon de Vous parler de politique dans ce moment, mais j'aime pouvoir me dire que j'ai toujours été sincère envers[1] Vous. En Vous priant de présenter mes hommages au Roi, je suis,

'Madame,

'de Votre Majesté

'la toute dévouée Sœur et Amie,

'VICTORIA R.'

This short letter drew forth the long letter of excuse from Louis Philippe, to his daughter, the Queen of the Belgians, which he intended to be communicated to England, and which is printed on page 17 of the 'Revue.' The King in this tries to turn the tables, and accuses England of breaking her word, in proof of which he could indeed only quote Lord Palmerston's unlucky despatch of July 19.

This sort of apology naturally gave yet more offence in England. Queen Victoria, on September 27, sent a long and very decided and conclusive answer to the Queen of the Belgians. She says in it, that she is in no way convinced by the explanations of the King. That what had happened was contrary to

[1] 'Revue rétrospective,' 'avec.'

the promise given her by the King at Eu, and from which Louis Philippe was in no ways released. For that the Court or Ministry had in any way since the Conference assisted the Coburg candidature, she must entirely deny. It was doing violence to Lord Palmerston's despatch to try to discover in it a proposal or recommendation of this candidature. She asks very appropriately, 'If the King entertained doubts of our integrity, why did he not try to have them cleared away, before acting as he has done? A quoi bon parler d'entente cordiale, si, en cas de besoin, on ne devait point s'entendre préalablement et cordialement?'

The whole letter is so convincing and of such irresistible power, that the republican editor of the 'Revue rétrospective' has evidently for this reason not printed it; for a Frenchman, even though he be a republican, would not willingly bring to light, documents which prove that the French Government had placed themselves in the wrong towards a foreign country. We give a few extracts from Stockmar's letters, as describing the personal feelings at the English Court. On October 1 he writes: 'All here are well, but really unhappy.' On November 10, 'The Queen from the first moment was full of kindness and forgiveness; the Prince, on the contrary, felt it as a

man must, as wrong in itself, as a national insult, and in its form as a personal affront, for he could truly say he had sacrificed his own feelings for his cousin, to higher political interests, and for this sacrifice had received scornful ingratitude in the most insulting form. But even the Prince is quiet, and will doubtless not allow himself to be carried away to satisfy his outraged feelings, at the expense of the true and great policy of peace. Great self-command will indeed be required by the Queen and Prince in this affair; for the French Government not only will not allow that they have acted in a faithless way, but maintain "We are in the right; because you have been false and have broken your word to us." One need be a saint not to lose one's patience under such treatment.'

We find Stockmar's opinion of the French policy in the affairs of the Spanish marriages, laid down in many places in his correspondence during 1846. He shows first with what extraordinary folly Louis Philippe acted.

'How could the King entirely destroy and tread under foot so many real, and for him and his family, such necessary and advantageous, political relations, to pursue such uncertain and pretended advantages? It is true I have heard from people who are much with him, that he often, if he takes a thing into his

head, sets about it in the most light-minded manner.' [1]

Stockmar notes, secondly, what endless harm Louis Philippe had done himself, both at home and abroad, since his conduct with regard to these marriages had destroyed all confidence in his character.[2]

He, thirdly, dwells on the way in which the whole foreign policy of France was disturbed by the destruction of the English alliance, as was proved in the next few years in the affairs of Switzerland and Italy.[3]

Lastly, Stockmar repeatedly dwells on the thought of the injurious effect that must be produced on the domestic affairs of France by the derangement of her foreign policy, the injury done to the characters

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[1] Regnault, in his 'Histoire de Huit Ans', vol. iii. p. 190, sums up Thiers' great speech on the Spanish marriages with the words, 'Aucun intérêt assez grave n'était attaché à ce mariage (Montpensier) pour justifier une rupture avec l'Angleterre, et l'alliance anglaise valait mieux que ce résultat.'

[2] Prince Joinville, in his celebrated letter to the Duke de Nemours, 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 482, says : 'La campagne espagnole nous a revêtus d'une déplorable réputation de mauvaise foi.'

[3] Joinville (loc. cit.) describes the situation in these words : 'Au dehors placés entre une amende honorable à Palmerston au sujet de l'Espagne, ou cause commune avec l'Autriche pour faire le Gensdarme en Suisse et lutter en Italie contre nos principes et nos alliés naturels.'

of Louis Philippe and Guizot by the Spanish marriages, the greater joint responsibility of both produced by that affair; and consequent on all this the embarrassment in their views of the internal state of things in France.[1]

We shall refrain from giving any further extracts from the correspondence, as we intend to lay before the reader a passage treating of the Spanish marriages, in an essay written by Stockmar in 1850–51. The increased knowledge of the facts and riper judgment acquired in the intervening years, gives this document all the greater value.[2]

As an introduction we must give a prophecy of Stockmar's, contained in a letter dated Dec. 14, 1847:

'A real fatality has prevailed in France ever since the Spanish marriages. This is always sure to be the case, when people are inconsistent in affairs of importance. There was a deep truth in Louis Philippe's words, "Cela va trop loin, cela va fausser

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[1] In this sense Lamartine truly said after the February revolution, in his first interview with the English ambassador, Lord Normanby (see his 'A Year of Revolution,' vol. i. p. 134): 'To the Spanish marriages Louis Philippe owes his downfall. I always said that selfish object would be his ruin; it drove him into a line of politics which the country would not stand.'

[2] This essay was published in the 'Berlin Constitutionelle Zeitung,' No. 426 of 1850, and Nos. 18 and 91 of 1851.

toute la politique de mon règne." He had guessed the truth: he lost his long-defended position, and will never win it again.' Not three months after this was written, Louis Philippe fled in an English ship as a refugee to England on March 3, 1848. His first employment was to thank Queen Victoria for the 'generous assistance' she had accorded to him and all his family in their flight, the same Queen whom he had so deeply wounded in the affair of the Spanish marriages.

After describing the characters of Louis Philippe and Guizot, Stockmar says that the King and his Minister were entirely agreed in the conviction, that the Opposition within and without the Chambers aimed no longer at Reform, but at Revolution, and a change of dynasty. Founded on this opinion, a solidarity developed itself more and more between the King and his Minister. Those who knew this, and were capable of forming a judgment had early feared that complications dangerous alike to the State and the dynasty might arise from it. The essay continues thus:

'By the marriage of his son with the Spanish Infanta, the King interpolated an *intermezzo*, which still more stultified his former policy, and unveiled to his contemporaries the weakest side of his character.

nation, by taking a leaf out of the book of policy of Louis XIV. The sober spectator may perceive the folly of the expectation that France, now at this day so entirely devoid of all dynastic sympathies, would look upon the advancement of the King's family interests as a great national gain; but it was as natural to the character of Louis Philippe as error is to egotism or to human nature in general.

'It is an explanatory circumstance, that besides the King, who pursued his plan with the full force of his strong will, his whole family, with the single exception of the Prince de Joinville,[1] desired the execution of the plan with a degree of ardour which silenced all the faculties of reason.

'But however strong and persistent the desires and wills might be on the one side, on the other side the various political difficulties which stood in the way of the fulfilment of these wishes were equally strong and unyielding. A short summary of these difficulties is sufficient for my purpose.

'Practical politics are determined principally by two elements: the nature of the intention which is the real soul of the undertaking, and the favour or

[1] 'Ces malheureux mariages espagnols,' he says in his letter to Nemours, 'Revue rétrospective,' p. 482, 'nous n'avons pas encore épuisé le réservoir d'amertume qu'ils contiennent.'

disfavour of the times in which the intention is to take outward shape. Both these elements were throughout unfavourable to the King's undertaking. The nature of the intention, in the interests and for the advancement of French policy, to endeavour to restrict the Queen of Spain in her choice of a husband to one particular family, was in itself a piece of foolish presumption, which assumes an almost grotesque aspect when we recollect, that it proceeded from a constitutional King, who owed his throne to the fall of the legitimate line. But the times in which this piece of presumption was attempted were the most unfavourable possible, because a crisis was preparing in the internal circumstances of France, the natural course of which was threatened through the change which the Spanish marriages must effect in the system hitherto pursued in France with regard to foreign politics. For even the mere preliminary arrangements for the King's undertaking entailed the destruction of the friendly relations then existing between France and England. It could not but be seen, that any breach with England, would alter the position hitherto held by the French Cabinet to the Cabinets of the other Great Powers; and that changes in the foreign policy of France must necessarily lead to changes in her domestic policy. It was to be

more especially foreseen and feared, that the breach with a constitutional ally, would tempt the King to abandon his own peculiar principles of policy, and to submit himself and his Government to the influence of foreign despotic Governments.

'To all these difficulties the King and his family, in the eager pursuit of their object, shut both eyes and ears. Even the consideration and estimation of the moral, so indissolubly connected with the political dangers, the inevitable result of which must principally affect the dynasty, were lost sight of. No one seems to have remembered, that the King could not possess any legitimate and honourable means for carrying through his monstrous pretension against Spain,—a pretension made in the political interests of France, and that nothing was at his command but the lies and intrigues of diplomacy, which, in the present case, could not be resorted to without injuring the King and his family most materially in the eyes of Europe. In other words, the King was blinded by the desire of aggrandising his family, and by the hope that he could make the mere reflection of this personal aggrandisement pass as solid political gain in the eyes of French ambition.'

'I must now turn to the consideration of the probable motives which induced the responsible Minister

to sacrifice the great, and national, and true policy of France, to the little, ambitions and covetous family policy of the King. I must add as a preliminary observation, that M. Guizot, in this whole affair, stood to the King as well as to the whole country, in an exceptional and totally free position; that is, he was then the only man who as Minister could undertake to carry out the King's policy. The possibility or impossibility, therefore, of the attempt depended entirely on his compliance or refusal.

'Since the year 1830 the war-cry of the Opposition had been much as follows:

'"France has won nothing by the July Revolution, for the new Government is, in domestic affairs, just as illiberal as the old, and in foreign affairs we are worse off than we were; deprived of our old allies, and our former influence in Europe, we see that the feeling of the Northern Powers towards us is one of illwill, even enmity, whilst we have to pay for our English alliance by daily concessions to that Power."

'It must be remembered that the friends of the Guizot Ministry draw from the character of those trivial reproaches, the argument that for the purpose of maintaining the proper influence in Spain, any Minister would have been forced by public opinion in

France, to take a decided part in influencing the choice of a husband for the Queen.

'I do not concern myself with these arguments further than as an excuse offered by one party; however, I am ready to accept them in favour of Guizot as well founded, though I cannot do so without bringing a heavy accusation against the uprightness of public opinion in France. I acknowledge, however, that besides the King, it was public opinion in France which encouraged M. Guizot in becoming the medium of a thoroughly unjustifiable claim upon Spain and her Queen. Whether a constitutional Minister ought to accommodate himself to such a demand, was in the first instance a question for his moral and political feeling of honour, uprightness, and duty. That the Minister experienced from these no opposition to the task imposed on him, we see in the declaration made at that time to the Chamber of Peers, "Nous ne consentirons jamais qu'à un mariage Bourbon pour la Reine d'Espagne." In this declaration the Minister had given the fullest expression to the intentions and scope of his policy. He had announced that he, as well as the King, regarded in the matter, only the political gain for France, and not the injustice against Spain and her Queen. The King valued the advantages accruing to his dynasty al-

ready so highly, that the Minister might have abstained from endeavouring to outdo the King on this point. However, he undertook this task to the delighted surprise of the King, in whose eyes zeal for the interests of the dynasty was no slight recommendation. The King was, therefore, the more willing that Guizot should draw from the other advantages all the political capital he could for himself and his Ministry. The Minister hoped, by carrying out the Spanish marriages, to glorify his Ministry by an act of power and independence, in a matter of great political importance, and, as he conceived, of lasting and historical interest. He considered this act as the best practical answer which he could, in the eyes of all Europe, offer to the long-continued complaints and reproaches of the French Opposition, and as the most significant proof that he could assert his own will as against England, and had courage enough to carry it into execution.

'Whether such ideas and designs mark a true and patriotic Minister, or a vain, irritable, and ambitious Frenchman, posterity will decide. But I think that I may already express the opinion that the line adopted by the Minister as to the Spanish marriages, in the face of the political difficulties and dangers mentioned above, promoted neither the true policy of France,

nor the safety of the dynasty, nor the dignity of the nation. Personal ambition risked a great stake against a small gain, and aggravated the pretensions of a provoking and self-willed policy, by the mode in which that policy was carried out. It is right that I should explain the meaning of these reproaches more exactly.

'The ministerial expression, "un mariage Bourbon," admitted of various solutions, involving various consequences which might be more or less injurious to the foreign and domestic policy of France. "Un mariage Bourbon" might be carried out in three different ways:

'1. By the union of the Queen of Spain with a son of the King of the French.

'2. By the marriage of the Queen with any Bourbon prince, whilst the Infanta, her sister, might marry a son of the King of the French.

'3. By the marriage of the Queen with a Bourbon, whilst the Infanta might marry any but a French prince.

'Each one of these solutions of the question had its own character, with the consequences necessarily resulting therefrom. However great might be the political error committed by M. Guizot, in binding himself in the face of Europe to take his stand on

"un mariage Bourbon," the error was notably increased by his declaring himself in favour of the second project rather than the third.

'The third scheme had appeared feasible to Sir Robert Peel's Cabinet, and would have been accepted by that of Lord John Russell. Their idea was to marry both the Spanish Princesses to the two Spanish Infants, without presuming to decide which of the Princes the Queen should choose. This proposal, had M. Guizot but accepted it, possessed the double advantage of enabling him to carry out his assumed duty of the "mariage Bourbon" without quarrelling with England. But would and could the Minister carry out the policy to which he had openly committed himself, and yet avoid the rupture with England? Those who were well informed on the subject say, that he at first thought such a rupture to be impossible. To those who remember how many proofs M. Guizot gave that he acquired his political views more from personal than from material circumstances, it will not seem impossible that he should fall into this mistake. He had already given sufficient proof, during his short residence in London as Ambassador, in 1840, of his incompetence to foresee rightly what would be politically possible in England.

'In drawing towards the close of this part of my

investigation, I must repeat the observation I made at the beginning, that it depended entirely on M. Guizot, whether the then existing condition of general politics, as well as that of the domestic policy of France, should be changed, complicated, or endangered by the Spanish marriages or not.

'The Minister had renounced the first project, of marrying the son of his King with the Queen of Spain, as too dangerous for the peace of Europe. If he had sent in his resignation, on the ground that he considered the second project also as dangerous, and impossible to carry out, we may safely assert that no Minister who succeeded him would have bound himself to carry through what M. Guizot had declared to be impossible. A new Ministry would not even have tried to enforce the far more modest third project, but would have been compelled, by the force of circumstances, to erase the Spanish marriages entirely from its programme and leave the affair to take its own course.

'But instead of such a determination, M. Guizot wished to play the first part in a political intrigue, which exceeds in immorality and vulgarity[1] every-

[1] A quotation from Regnault's 'Histoire de Huit Ans,' vol. iii. p. 161, will explain this: 'Les journaux anglais prétendirent que la nuit du 26 au 27 (août 1846, before Queen Isabella con-

thing brought out in modern times on the theatre of politics; a part which would have shut out anyone who had attempted to play it, in the circle of private life, from all respectable society.

'The Spanish marriages were carried through, and became at once the guiding star for the King's foreign policy; they also exercised considerable influence on his measures of domestic government, and thus became a concurrent cause of the catastrophe of 1848.

'The delight of the Royal Family at their success in Spain would have been great, if it had not been mingled with anxiety as to what Europe, but especially England, would say. The King, choleric, very excit-

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sented to the marriage with Don Francisco) fut passée dans de scandaleuses orgies entre les deux Reines, l'Ambassadeur français, et quelques affidés; que le consentement au double mariage fut arraché à l'ivresse; enfin que cette soudaine détermination devait être attribuée . . . aux hallucinations de la débauche.'

We do not attempt to decide on the truth of this, only the objection which Regnault raises against the correctness of the facts, does not seem to us of any weight. He says, 'L'impartialité nous oblige de rappeler que le double projet était depuis longtemps discuté, que Marie-Christine y mettait encore plus d'empressement que Louis-Philippe, et que par conséquent elle n'avait pas besoin d'y être excitée par les fumées du vin.'

This is true, but the point was not, how to obtain Christine's consent, but that of Isabella, to the marriage with Don Francisco, her dislike of whom she had openly declared, as we have seen.

able, but at the same time sanguine and light-hearted, was not free from cares. He had, however, the courage to abide by his decision, and possessed great tenacity of purpose in all affairs touching himself. It had been his fate, his whole life long, to get constantly into the greatest difficulties, but as constantly to escape again from them. He therefore was easily reassured, sought for comfort in persons and things, and took it where and how he best could. As he fancied that he knew England much better than he really did, he comforted himself chiefly with what he called the practical good sense of the English nation. He constantly assured himself and others, "they will be angry, and make up their minds to it most unwillingly; but they are too practical not to know it would be against their own interests to begin a serious quarrel on account of it."

'But matters did not pass off as harmlessly in England as the King hoped. The English public considered the Spanish marriages under two aspects, the political and the moral. The former was too remote in its practical political bearing, to appeal to the clear judgment and lively sympathy of the multitude; the latter, on the contrary, lay open and unconcealed before the eyes of all, and could be seen, estimated, and judged by all. The verdict on all

sides, but especially in the middle classes, was against the King, and was severe and unsparing. This verdict found full expression in the whole English press, and thus passed over into France, where it made a profound impression. Those who were indifferent to politics, and they form the majority in most countries, learnt the story from the English side, and were thus roused against the conduct of their own Government in a matter on which, if left to themselves, they would have bestowed neither attention nor sympathy. But all those who were opposed to the Government found in the attacks of the English press on the King and his policy, the welcome confirmation of their own reproaches and complaints.

'The injury thus accruing to the King was very great; for the want of confidence in his honesty and character, hitherto only felt in a narrow circle, was thus spread abroad through all countries and in every class. The dangers arising from the impression thus produced on the masses, did not escape the observation of the King. There are moments in which the most determined resolution to shut the eyes to approaching adversity, is overcome by the overpowering force of truth. It was in such a moment that the King involuntarily exclaimed: "Cela va trop loin, cela va fausser toute la politique de mon règne." He had

seen with a prophet's eye the future course of his policy and of his own fate.

'Whether the same doubts and forebodings disturbed the mind of the Minister, I am unable to say; but I do not think it probable. I should rather believe that his own character, and the apparent personal advantage, would prevent him from dwelling on such considerations. It was more in his nature to persist stubbornly in showing that "he had been in the right," and to bend all his powers to carry his point. However much the King might doubt whether he had acted wisely, he was as determined as his Minister to maintain that he was in the right. And it was just this determination of both to maintain that they were in the right, in the eyes of foreign nations, that, according to my notions, hindered them from seeing and carrying out what was right in their own domestic policy. The consequences of the policy being pursued with regard to the Spanish marriages, obliged both King and Minister to direct their attention, mind, and powers constantly to a distant object. They thus lost part of that inward and outward freedom, which, more than ever before, was needed for the right appreciation and management of the domestic affairs of France, then becoming every day more and more critical. The effect of this was soon

perceived in the King. Hitherto in all political crises, he found little difficulty in finding a way of escape through a change of Ministry, but now, he imagined he could only stand with and through the Guizot Cabinet, without which he considered all further success, both in foreign and domestic affairs, impossible. His chief concern, and it absorbed his whole attention, was to prevent the majority of the Great Powers from joining in the English interpretation of the Peace of Utrecht, as far as it concerned the Spanish marriages, and then to make himself sufficiently strong at home to withstand those machinations of his political enemies, which they, as he feared, were ready to employ in opposition to the development of his conservative tendencies.

'The Minister appears at that period to have awaited the future with greater self-possession and more courage and confidence than the Sovereign.'

The Essay then passes on to another subject.

In April 1847, Stockmar, as we have already stated, left England. We will give an extract from one of his letters written shortly before this, in which he describes the Queen and the Prince Consort. If the reader recollects how Stockmar depicted the Prince in 1839, and even in the first few years after his marriage,

he will not fail to read with interest the testimony borne by the same keen observer as to the further development of this remarkable man:

'The Prince has improved very much lately. He has evidently a head for politics, and before his keen eye, even prejudices proceeding from education, or want of experience, could not long maintain themselves. If convincing arguments are laid before him, he immediately forms a sensible and equitable opinion, be the matter what it may. The Prince has become, too, far more independent. It is true that his vivacious nature prevents him sometimes, from previously thoroughly thinking over a subject, and he occasionally acts too rashly, but he has already become too wise to commit great mistakes. He will often venture in, and meet with bruises; but no one can become an experienced soldier, without having been in battle, and received a few blows; and such as he is, a few small wounds will help to give him self-confidence, and also make him more cautious. It is not likely he will make any great political blunders in the present state of tension with France; for he is certainly not of a passionate temperament, and his sight is so sharp and sure, that he will not easily lose the right road, and go astray.

'His mental activity is constantly on the increase,

and he gives the greater part of his time to business, without complaining. The relations between husband and wife are all one could desire.

'The character of the Queen, too, developes itself to great advantage. She gains daily in judgment and experience. The candour, truthfulness, honesty, and fairness with which she judges of men and things, are really delightful—the impartial self-knowledge with which she speaks of herself is thoroughly charming.

'And so far as these personal relations are concerned, I look on into the future with confidence and hope. But not so in regard to politics. The existing state of things, as it has gradually taken form since 1815, has in the last seven months shown signs of change. I foresee great revolutions.[1] What will happen? I cannot venture to predict. I have little reliance on the wisdom of our present ruling statesmen—we must be prepared for great mistakes.'

Stockmar went to Coburg by way of Berlin. Here the King had inaugurated a new era by the patent of February 3, 1847, convoking the United Diet. On the 11th of April he had opened the Assembly,

[1] He wrote to Bunsen (April 3): 'I am more and more convinced that we are entering on a great political crisis. Old things are falling, times are changing, and a new life will rise from the ruins.'

with one of his remarkable speeches. Stockmar arrived in the midst of the excitement caused by it, and in the crisis connected with the debates on the answer to the Address. We will only give one extract from a letter which he wrote on these subjects, from Berlin on April 17, to a friend:

'The position of the Prince of Prussia seems to me a hazardous one, for he really is one of the Ministers.[1] Besides, he is now in a state of apprenticeship as a constitutional king, for such a future and position are left to him, you may believe me, by the present King, through the act of February 3rd.'

The further development of the parliamentary drama in Berlin made, as was inevitable, no pleasing impression on Stockmar. He could only see half-measures on all sides: on the part of the Government, in that it called together a great assembly for consultation, without granting it any true political rights, or any guarantee of meeting periodically; and on the part of the liberal Opposition, which seemed unable to assume any determined and consistent attitude against the incomplete concessions of the Government. The Opposition might either appeal uncon-

[1] He was a member of the State Council, and took part in the sittings, which seems hardly compatible with the position of heir to the throne in constitutional States.

ditionally to the political expediency of the demands of the present time, or place itself on the legal ground established by former laws of the reign of Frederick William III., promising general Diets endowed with definite rights. That the promises of an absolute monarch afforded a very weak foundation in law, was palpable. Nevertheless the Opposition followed the second course. It maintained that the United Diet was the promised assembly of the states of the realm, possessing without doubt the rights which had been promised to the latter. But even this principle it did not carry out consistently. It adopted an Address which, casting a doubt on the real possession of those rights, appealed to the favour of the King. And when in conclusion the Government invited the United Parliament to choose a committee, which in the absence of the Parliament should exercise the precarious rights of the states—a committee whose action appeared from the point of view assumed by the Opposition a violation of those rights of the states which they declared had been transferred to the United Diet, the majority proceeded to the election in June, under protest. On this occasion Stockmar, on July 11, 1847, writes to Bunsen:

'In Berlin all is quiet again. What you and others of my German friends have asked from heaven, has

been granted abundantly. Nothing has been taken from other countries, nothing imitated; all has been purely German; I fear only too German. According to my opinion, there was no clear consciousness of right, based on real conviction, and therefore intrepid, and not to be shaken. What a strange mixture of legal and political demands, so that I fully expected all opposition would at last take shelter in reservations, as actually came to pass, in the last decisive act, viz. the election of committees. It seemed to me essentially German, first to insist on a decided right, and then to yield under reservation. Deputies of clear and manly views could only either simply elect, or simply decline to do so. There will be plenty of German jurists, who are conscientiously of opinion that according to law the deputies could not decline to elect; but there are surely cases in politics which justify passive opposition against demands formally lawful. It may be expected, therefore, that unless your Government soon displays a wisdom, if not transcending human limits, at least beyond what we have hitherto been accustomed to, the estates will be brought in the further course of events, and by the natural laws of gravitation, openly to adopt passive resistance. But as in politics we ought to consider and treat what has happened as if

there were still time to reflect and to improve, let us admit, particularly in consideration of the King's individuality, that it was better that the moment of passive resistance was postponed. As besides this, I am determined, as a German, to see in all that has happened at Berlin only what is good and hopeful, I shall consider the elections of the committees as a simple fact, without enquiring for motives and causes, only looking to the bright side, viz., that the King, through the refusal of elections, was not immediately startled and offended. For your sake, I am willing also to acknowledge the harmony that exists between the want of decision of the estates and of public opinion. This harmony is worth something, and public opinion is evidently as unclear and undecided as the estates themselves. It would have considered unconditional elections as cowardice, and unconditional refusal as a revolutionary measure on the part of the estates.

'God bless you.

'STOCKMAR.'

CHAPTER XXII.

GERMAN AFFAIRS.

1848.

Stockmar's observations on the system of Louis Philippe and Guizot, which leads to the February Revolution—His old views on German affairs—His hopes of Prussia, at the beginning of the German movement—The Prussian Revolution, and its effect on the course of German politics—Stockmar goes to Frankfort in May, as Envoy to the Diet—His plan (beginning of May) for the reconstruction of Germany—Sent to Bunsen, the King of Prussia, and Prince Albert—His acquaintance with Usedom—Stockmar on the Diet, and his part in it —Journey to Berlin, early in June—Letter of Frederick William IV., and conversation with him—H. von Arnim's resignation—His letter —Impressions of the Berlin journey—'Nephelococcygia' at Frankfort—Election of the Vicar of the Empire—State of things in South Germany — German unity —Spontaneous dissolution of the Diet —Stockmar's share in the last sitting—Stockmar declines the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, anticipates the rupture between the National Assembly and the Governments, overestimates the revolutionary power of the German movement—Defence of his Prussian sentiments —Vain attempts in July and August, in conjunction with Bunsen, to drive Prussia into action—The democratic sentiments of the German people—Life in Frankfort, intercourse with Blittersdorf—Schleswig-Holstein Question—The question of the armistice of Malmoe at Frankfort—Conversation with the Archduke—Description of the same—Relation of Austria to Germany—The *émeute* of September—H. von Auerswald—Pfuel's Ministry in Prussia—Journey to Berlin, end of September—Back to England in November—Offer of a mission—Schleswig-Holstein business—Relation of Austria to Germany

—Letter of Gagern on this subject, and views taken by English statesmen on German affairs (December 3)—Max von Gagern's reply—Public opinion and the English press on Germany—Stockmar's defence of his German policy in 1848.

LIKE all the more quick-sighted observers of the immediate future in the year 1847, Stockmar had foreseen disturbances in Europe, and especially in France. The February revolution, therefore, did not take him by surprise.

His observations on the political system of Louis Philippe and Guizot, which led to the fall of both of them, are contained in an Essay founded on most comprehensive and trustworthy materials, and published in the 'Constitutionelle Zeitung,' No. 426 of 1850, and Nos. 18, 91, of 1851. We have already taken from it the extract given in the last chapter on the Spanish marriages, and will now subjoin the rest of the Essay:

'The unexpected, sudden, character of the catastrophe which befell France in the year 1848, threatening danger to so many other countries, had so moved and disturbed the nations of Europe, that one cannot feel surprised at a general absence of that prudence, which postpones a final judgment on so immense an event, until its essential causes have become discernible.

'That the King had fallen and had been driven

away, was enough for the majority of voices to blame him, as the sole cause of the catastrophe; whilst an impartial and careful examination of those essential causes, would make it more than probable that to the King in his position as a constitutional ruler, the smaller share of blame must be attached, and the larger share to others, and to one person in particular. As every extensive disturbance of public peace and order in France, attacks the existing European *status quo*, and particularly affects our own country profoundly and permanently, every contribution, offered in good faith, towards the more thorough knowledge and appreciation of the late catastrophe, and its immediate causes, may claim an unprejudiced reception and an impartial examination.

'As from the year 1814, I had, though only from time to time, yet repeatedly, the opportunity of observing public affairs and persons in France, in their own places and positions, I had become convinced, that the Government handled the charter neither honestly nor wisely, but considered a system of immorality, bribery, and deceit as allowable—in fact, as expedient. The revolution in the year 1830 put an end to this untenable system, and everything now depended on governing according to a new and better one. Events had clearly traced the task to be

undertaken by the new King and his Ministry. It consisted in remodelling the Charter into a constitution fitting and possible for France, and then in governing honourably and conscientiously, according to the letter and spirit of the improved charter.

'It is an observation which many of those who were most near to the King could make, that he persuaded himself that he was perfectly acquainted with the doctrine of modern constitutional Government. But later experiences contest the accuracy of this self-reliance, and show us but too clearly that he had learnt more of the errors, than of the truths of this doctrine.

'Firm convictions were not instinctive necessities to this King; still, during his whole reign, he preserved an unshaken faith in the truth of the following tenets:—

'1. That France could only be governed constitutionally; and that therefore it was a matter of necessity for him so to govern.

'2. That his predecessors had fallen through ignorance of the spirit of the times, and of the French character, as well as by want of ability to govern modern France.

'3. That *he* possessed the needful knowledge and ability in a high degree; that, in fact, he had

a deeper political knowledge and wider experience, than all those men out of whom he could form a Ministry.

'In the two last of these tenets lay, according to my notion, that irresistible force, which from the beginning of his reign brought the King into opposition with the first of these tenets, and enticed him from the right way on to an inclined plane, from which, in the course of a lengthened life, he must by the mere force of gravitation be drawn downward, unless the constitutional power of resistance were afforded him, at the right moment, by a Minister true to his duty.

'The voice of reason yields easily to the pressure of the natural temperament, and the man who is driven by the latter to look for the means to the end in personal cleverness, will, even unknown to himself, esteem his method more than the principle. If he be a constitutional King and possessed of personal dexterity, he will be constantly tempted to place himself *before* the shield of ministerial responsibility, instead of remaining *behind* it, as the law requires. The new King fell into both faults. He formed for himself a doctrine as to the extent of his kingly authority and action, which he derived from the spirit of his political convictions as before

described, and according to which he assumed and firmly maintained his attitude towards his Ministers.

'But little as the practice of this doctrine agreed with the letter and spirit of the new Charter, none of the Ministers, except Casimir Périer and perhaps Molé, offered the only effective constitutional resistance to the unconstitutional tendencies of the King. And if on the side of the Minister there was occasionally a show of resistance, it was connected less with the principle on which the Constitution was founded, than with the line of proceeding to be followed in isolated acts of government, The King expected to have the deciding vote in the Cabinet, and acquired it by affability, patience, and perseverance. To dictate, and to allow themselves to be dictated to, became natural to the King and his Ministers, and the most important factor in a constitutional government, a Ministry that justly appreciated and employed their responsibility towards the Constitution, was wanting, (with the exception of those mentioned above), during the whole period of the King's administration.

'The question is therefore already answered, how it was, that so soon after the fall of the old Government, the new drifted into the spirit and course of the previous system, and thus itself destroyed the possibility of keeping its promise, and of making the

Charter a reality. Ministers, ignorant of real statesmanship, and destitute of love for their country, forgot, in their blindness, want of energy, and selfishness, their constitutional rights, as towards the King, their duty, position, and power. They incurred the greater guilt, if the revised Charter remained an unreality, and as such could save neither King nor State in the hour of danger. For without their guilt we should have seen, even under the rule of this mistaken sovereign, that an honest constitutional discharge of their duty on the part of the Ministers, would have converted the fiction of the infallibility of the sovereign into a reality, so that his mistakes and self-will alone could not have effected his own ruin, and at the same time, that of the State. The English kings of the house of Brunswick, and more especially George IV., applied in the same manner all their energies to ruin themselves and the monarchy; but in vain.

'Anyone who is anxious to find out the explanation of how these sovereigns were saved against their will, or of the difference in the fates of the English kings since 1689, and the French sovereigns since 1814, will discover it most surely in an historical comparison of the conduct of the English and French ministers.

'In his old age, through long custom and an appa-

rent success, the King's belief in the justice of his own political views and maxims of government assumed the form of blind obstinacy. At the same time the course of political events brought him M. Guizot as Prime Minister. According to the testimony of his friends, the character of this man is blameless. His writings bear witness to his remarkable talents, his sagacity, his accurate information, his diligence, and the firmly linked connection of his political ideas and maxims; whilst the French Parliamentary Transactions sufficiently prove his extraordinary oratorical talents. But we are only concerned here with his fitness and legitimate claims to be a Minister.

'I have in the course of my life met with many statesmen, who began their career at once with the exercise of their functions, without any appropriate theoretical knowledge; and from their own immediate actual contemplation of real life, were only led later, by the method of induction, to lay down an abstract of general maxims and special rules, for the guidance of their political conduct. I have known others who, through rich endowments and extensive information, have, long before they attained to any high official position, possessed scientifically founded theories and systems, according to which they could prove, in the most convincing manner, how wise and convenient,

and therefore necessary, it was to comprehend, rule, and guide the existing life of a state according to their conceptions. These were men to whom firm convictions were an absolute necessity of nature, and who in their way had become so entirely convinced of the truth of their own ideas, that even the palpable proofs to the contrary furnished by the outer world could inspire them with no doubts. M. Guizot belonged notoriously to this class of statesmen.

'He in whose hands the fate of many rests, can seldom singly and unaided achieve anything exceptionally propitious, or unpropitious; he can only do so when aided and abetted by the co-operation of others. The King's convictions, opinions, designs, and blind obstinacy, found their entire complement in the vain and boundless self-sufficiency, and the arrogant dogmatism of the Minister; and this complement was the more powerful and effective, because both in France and abroad, M. Guizot was considered a thoroughly disinterested statesman.

'The King and his Minister were entirely united in the conviction, that the Opposition, both within and without the Chambers, were no longer bent on Reform, but on Revolution, and the destruction of the dynasty and the existing state of things. Founded

on this opinion, the union arising from a feeling of joint responsibility, grew more and more strong between the King and the Minister, at least so far as the character of the King would allow of such an union. From this moment they both adopted this opinion as their guiding maxim, and the King and his Minister determined at once to refuse every important demand made by the Opposition, as any concessions would be made, not to a constitutional Opposition, but to a party disguised as such, whilst really determined on the subversion of everything. They would check the revolutionary tendencies, which they both discovered in every political movement and everywhere, by main force, not by reform. This decision forced both King and Minister out of the right constitutional course, and began a conflict which was not directed, as they wished to imagine, against the efforts of a revolutionary party, but in reality against the legally existing freedom of the nation. On the carrying through of this conflict, the Minister more especially staked his sagacity and his honour; he relied on the army and the fortifications of Paris, and ceased to be afraid, as heretofore, of possible disturbances and tumults.

'From the very nature of the circumstances under

which the King came to the throne, he must from the first have had numerous political adversaries, who made it their constant business to excite, to keep up, and to propagate, a feeling of mistrust in his Government. Unfortunately the character of the King was such, as rather to encourage than to weaken the efforts of his enemies. It was his misfortune that he easily made on the individuals with whom he came in contact, an impression of being equivocal and untrustworthy. Levity and blind self-confidence on his part, and the most determined malignity and constant mistakes on the part of others, had in the course of years secured to his opponents a dangerous success; and it must not be forgotten, that even after the first few years of Guizot's administration, the unpopularity of the King, especially with the middle classes in Paris, had notably increased. Even at that time, many of the better informed and those capable of judging, feared that the course which Guizot had taken in foreign and domestic affairs, would lead to complications as dangerous for the state as for the dynasty; whilst, on the contrary, all those of the same mind with the King, and Ministers, announced that the resignation of Guizot would be synonymous with the triumph of the revolution.'

(Here follows the extract already given on the

Spanish marriages, which we must ask the reader to remember, for the sake of the connection.)

'When I compare the actual state of affairs at that time, and the excited state of public feeling in France, with the unconcern, the courage, and the steadfastness with which the Minister pursued his accustomed political course, I find myself confronted with a psychological puzzle. Instead of attempting to find the key, I will here give the assurance which the Minister himself gave to several of his friends, immediately after the catastrophe: "The darker the political horizon became in France, the more the difficulties accumulated in his way, and the more determinately his opponents attacked his policy, the more conscientiously and honestly did he maintain and fortify himself within the circle of constitutional laws." In as far as this assurance applies to the system and to mere theories, I consider it as perfectly correct.

'On the ground of mere constitutional theory and formal right, the wish of the King to support his Minister as long as possible, was as little to be blamed, as the determination of the Minister only to yield to his opponents, when all the legal remedies of his system were exhausted. He had all the time, a considerable parliamentary numerical majority.

experienced in constitutional government, would have acted in Guizot's place as he did. What the numerical majority really is, in a Parliament that is looked on by the greater part of a nation as a governmental, not a popular Parliament, what it can do, and how it generally ends—what such a majority is really worth to the Minister in his political calculations — can be seen again and again in all parliamentary histories. These show most legibly, how in very stormy and dangerous times, only those parliamentary resolutions possess conservative and reassuring force, which can be approved by the adherents of the existing form of government, and which at the same time extort from the enemies of order, at least the inward conviction, that they are the voice of a majority, who have known how in the hour of their country's danger to renounce their own party spirit, and exercise patriotic moderation and equity.

'It is notorious that the policy imposed on the Minister, and which he undertook to carry out, was in its foreign relations blamed by all thoughtful people in France, as pregnant with mischief, and in its domestic relations was rejected as intended to bring about a change in the Constitution. Could the Minister then, with any truth and right, consider his

majority as a real one and expect such decisions from it as those I have described above?

'I therefore answer M. Guizot's own assurance with the observation, that a Minister who, in such circumstances as his, really meant to keep within the bounds of what was constitutionally right, had no better means of doing so, than by resigning his office, without thinking of his majority. His determination of remaining under such circumstances, involved the certain danger of coming at last to a conflict, which, though begun on legitimate grounds and in a legitimate form, was certain, from its very nature, to lead to what was illegal.

'In fact the history of all conflicts which unpopular Governments have ventured to wage, trusting to the invincible might of parliamentary majorities, show the same results. Under favourable concurrent circumstances, aided by most skilful leaders, the Government might for a time defend an unpopular line of policy, but never maintain it. And even in these cases the support is successful, because it is really restricted to the upholding of a certain state of things. Never did success attend the defence of a policy, which was considered by the people as inimical and aggressive towards themselves, and which in reality only wore the outward appearance of the

defensive because the Minister had known how to put his enemies to the disadvantage of having to begin the conflict.

'Such aggressive tendencies were at that time attributed by many to the Guizot Ministry. His majority, therefore, ran the same danger to which similar majorities were exposed under similar circumstances. For history always teaches that directly the storm reached its height, the majorities were seized with a consciousness of the unpopularity and injustice of the cause for which they contended; that individuals among them hesitated in their persuasions and intentions, the hitherto firm coherence of the members was lost, and the whole, overpowered with a feeling of their weakness, was soon broken up.

'The drift of these lessons receives a new confirmation in the fate of the Guizot Ministry.

'According to his own assertions, the Minister only upheld the existing Constitution and order in a strictly constitutional manner; but according to the assertions of his opponents, he interpreted the Constitution in an arbitrary and unconstitutional manner, and attacked that which he professed to defend. The consequences were such as we always find everywhere under similar circumstances; an immense majority in the country, finding that their voices were not repre-

sented in Parliament, actuated by a strong feeling of general sympathy, formed a coalition, took the most vivid interest in the Parliamentary opposition, and became its most powerful ally. From this moment the catastrophe of 1848 was inevitable; and though the Minister and his majority still believed they could escape the tribunal of public opinion, the latter had already prepared their form of accusation, in terms that were legible to all, except the wilfully blind.' [1]

The French revolution of February had excited Stockmar's keenest interest, apart from its general political importance, not only on account of the connection of cause and effect which he traced between it and the Spanish marriages, but because of the lessons it seemed to offer with regard to the constitutional system, which had been an object of attention and theoretical reflection with him for many years. But the German movement of 1848 touched

[1] Stockmar always held to this dislike of Guizot. As late as January 3, 1852, he writes: 'I cannot bear him, in fact I honestly hate him, as I attribute to him a great share of the faults which brought about the late catastrophes in Europe. I believe as strongly as anyone can, that but for Guizot's arrogance, pride, carelessness, and want of knowledge of men and things, Louis Philippe would have died on the throne, and his grandson would now be king.'

his inmost heart, filled as it was with the most glowing patriotic feelings.

Since the years 1814 and 1815 his views on German affairs were unchanged on the following main points:

1. That the cause of the political decline of Germany—of her weakness, impotence, and disgrace in the eyes of foreign nations, and of her miserable internal condition—was to be found in her divided state, in the number of sovereignties created by Napoleon, in the want of any uniting central force.

2. That the dualism of Prussia and Austria could only exist to the injury of Germany and Prussia, even of Austria itself; and as unnatural, could not be permanently maintained.

3. That Austria had never ruled Germany, but only used her for her non-German purposes; and that this could and would never be otherwise, because the centre of gravity in Austria lies too far out of Germany, so that under the supremacy of Austria, the peculiar life of Germany could never attain its proper development.

4. That Prussia, by the nature of things, was called to be the central Power of Germany.

5. That the smaller States, for the sake of national unity, must submit to considerable restrictions.

We extract from a letter of Stockmar's of April 20, 1849, a long passage, which shows us to a great extent the historical considerations on which these views were mainly founded:

'Before the death of the German Empire, the peculiar policy of Austria was, according to my views, the cause of the ruin of German affairs. Austria never ruled Germany as she wished to be ruled, or according to her real interests, but only as a means for the ends of Austria, for the ends of a dynasty, which tried to acquire and did acquire in the East, through German power and influence, that authority which she could never herself obtain in Germany. But so great a nation does not allow itself to be for ever made use of in this manner; hence the gradual decay of the power of Austria in Germany, and with it the ruin of the German Empire itself.

'By the territorial arrangement of Germany, on which Napoleon built his Rhine-confederation, it was really torn more asunder than had ever been the case before. He divided Germany into three parts, Prussia, Austria, and the Rhineland, as effectually as Poland had been divided. After the fall of Napoleon, the Austrian-Metternich policy took his place. This policy was an attempt to govern Germany again, as before, merely as a means to an end.

'For this end Austria had to acquire a complete supremacy. The natural opponent to this supremacy was Prussia, which was, after the peace, stronger in German elements than Austria. The more Metternich succeeded in upholding the territorial scaffolding of the Rhine-confederation, the more allies he had against Prussia, and the easier it became for him, first to assume the same position with the princes of the Rhine-confederation, which Napoleon had once held, and secondly to neutralise the influence of Prussia in the rest of Germany. In this way Napoleon's position as protector of the Rhine-confederation was perfectly assumed by Metternich; and with regard to Germany, his position was even stronger than Napoleon's had ever been, from the circumstance that he succeeded in inducing two kings of Prussia to place themselves for thirty-three years in the leading strings of the Austrian policy. Metternich certainly did not use this supremacy for foreign wars of conquest, as did Napoleon, but for a moral warfare against the influence of Prussia, against the spread of revolutionary doctrines, against constitutional government and Protestantism, and in favour of the Jesuits and Absolutism. This policy, just as faulty as had been the former policy of Austria, was certain first to entangle again, and then to ruin,

the affairs of Germany. The flood of democracy, which spread over Germany in 1848, is pre-eminently the result of the policy of Austria from 1814 to 1847. This policy, which had for its principal task to enable the German princes, under apparently constitutional forms, to govern really absolutely, brought about, instead of the wished-for results, that political dissolution in Saxony, Würtemberg, Baden, and the two Hesses, which is the greatest difficulty in the way of any attempt at the reconstruction of Germany.'

Stockmar had the great pleasure of seeing his views set forth most clearly by a South German, Paul Pfizer, in his admirable little work, 'On the Development of Public Law in Germany under the Constitution of the Bund. 1835.'[1]

Starting, then, with these convictions, he was in no doubt, when the storm broke over Germany in March 1848, as to the right goal to be aimed at.

On March 18 he wrote from Coburg, where the news of the revolutions in Vienna and Berlin could not then have been known:

'A mighty and powerful excitement has taken

[1] Stockmar had the habit, in reading a book, of deeply underscoring any passages that pleased him. In his copy of P. Pfizer's book there is hardly a page without such lines.

possession of the masses in the west and south of Germany. Nine or ten millions of Germans have already given utterance to their meaning by words and deeds, and five or six of the greater German princes have shown their sympathy with the movement by governmental acts. The State, on which since 1814 I had reckoned as leader and supporter, still keeps back, silent, delaying, and, as it appears, half undecided, half inclined to the same mistakes, by which it has already lost the great position in which it stood towards constitutional Germany. He must now come to a decision, though it is late to decide, perhaps too late. Should this decision prove to be the one securing the welfare of Germany and Prussia, anarchy and terrible sufferings may yet be averted; otherwise an entire separation between North and South Germany is inevitable. I still, at this moment, consider it possible to unite the whole of the constitutional States of Germany as a Confederate State, under the presidency of the King of Prussia as Emperor. In this confederate State there is no place at present for Austria; later on, possibly, the German provinces of Austria might enter it, but not under an Emperor of Austria, as now, but an Archduke of Austria, who of course might at the same time be

and remain monarch of the various States now under Austrian rule.'

But the hopes founded on Prussia were only a few days later dashed to the ground, for the time being. King Frederick William IV. had in his decree of March 18, 1848, an hour before the revolution broke out, announced that his Government had resolved for the regeneration of Germany, to propose to the members of the German Bund, to form her into a Confederate State.

The proclamation of March 21, in consequence of the Berlin revolution of the 18th and 19th, went a step further. It declared that the King would take upon himself the leadership in the days of danger; that in future Prussia would be merged in Germany; that an opportunity would be given to the princes and estates of Germany to constitute themselves as a general German Assembly, with the functions of a united Diet, in order to deliberate on the regeneration of the Fatherland. The same day the King rode through the streets of Berlin with the German flag.

Henry von Arnim, the author of this proclamation, complained afterwards (in his pamphlet 'Frankfort and Berlin,' p. 18), 'that it had been received by the rest of Germany with *offensive scorn and contempt*, and that Germany was not yet ripe for such ideas.' There is

a great deal of truth in this. Germany had not yet made up her mind; she had not yet passed through the dialectic process, which ended with the adoption of the Imperial Constitution, and the election of the Emperor. On the other hand, it may be said that the proclamation and demonstration of the 21st came too late. Had they preceded the defeat of the Prussian monarchy, the 18th and 19th March, they would have produced a very different effect. It must be owned that Prussia was not then in a condition to carry out the ideas announced on March 21. She was not mistress of herself, and yet proposed to lead others.

The rest of Germany, accustomed for years to see on the part of Prussia only words and not deeds, great pretensions and small performance, had no inducement to receive the proclamation and the procession of March 21, with the black, red, and gold flag, with anything but shakings of the head and irony.

On March 31, Stockmar writes:

'The poor King of Prussia has entirely broken down. He has never yielded or acted except when it was not only too late, but when it would have been better to do nothing. Metternich and the Emperor of Russia were the ruin of him and of Germany. If he had but listened to Prince Albert's

letter of 1846! How simple, how easy it would have been for him to follow another course in the Cracow affair; and how secure, how glorious, how great would he be now, powerful enough to uphold all Germany! In Germany nobody will hear of him now. "Rather the Emperor of Austria, or the King of Bavaria." Thus in our country the thing is confounded with the person.'

Meantime the German movement seemed to be taking form and substance at Frankfort. On March 10 the Diet itself had chosen seventeen 'men trusted by all parties,' to prepare a revision of the Constitution of the old Bund.

On the 31st, the so-called preliminary Parliament was opened at Frankfort, for deliberation on the duties, number, and form of election of the German National Assembly, which had been demanded; and the Diet sanctioned, by its resolutions of March 30 and April 7, the meeting of the National Assembly at Frankfort, 'in order to arrange the German Constitution, between the governments and the people.' The following weeks brought Stockmar the opportunity of visiting, in an official character, the theatre of action, of such deep interest to him.

On April 5 the Diet determined that the several states, united in one Curia, should be permitted to be

represented in the Diet, each by a separate deputy, without interfering with the rules hitherto observed as to the right and management of voting.

Stockmar accepted the appointment of deputy to the Diet for Coburg.

Bunsen, in a letter to M. von Usedom,[1] says he had advised Prince Albert to arrange this, and had earnestly entreated Stockmar to undertake the post. Bunsen felt it was of importance to concentrate the best influences in Frankfort. The Government of Coburg may have felt the same. The Coburg Minister, Von Stein, wrote to Stockmar on May 3: 'You have gratified me extremely by accepting the post of deputy to the Diet. I entertain no great hopes of the practical effect of the Diet, but I have the fullest dependence on your influence, and your co-operation within and without the Assembly.'

Stockmar arrived in Frankfort on May 12, and took his seat in the Diet on the 16th. But before we turn our attention to his career as member of the Diet, it will be proper to consider his plan for the reconstruction of Germany, which he had drawn up as early as April, although he only published it in May. If we devote some time to this, we feel jus-

[1] Bunsen's Life, vol. ii. p. 168.

tified in doing so, because in the time that has since elapsed, only one of the principal points under consideration, the withdrawal of Austria from the German Confederation, has found its solution through subsequent events, whilst the definite arrangement of the position of Prussia to the rest of Germany is still an unsolved problem.[1]

We give Stockmar's plan, in its latest form, as it was printed in the supplement 148 to the 'Heidelberger Deutsche Zeitung,' of May 27, as a correspondence of May 24, 1848, from Frankfort.

Stockmar's Plan for the Reconstruction of Germany.

'May, 1848.

'The time presses for founding the unity of Germany. The most natural form for this unity would be a single State in the form of a constitutional monarchy, embracing the whole of Germany. Still difficulties stand in the way of the formation of such a single State. In order to show what is possible, we will here point out a course which would at once lead to no small degree of union in political life, whilst opening the way to the natural development of a perfectly consolidated State, leaving the completion of the same

[1] Written in the spring of 1870.

to the future. This, a course unlike any yet proposed, leaves existing arrangements, and yet creates a more perfect internal union than any yet given.

'The weakest point in the various proposals made hitherto for an Imperial Constitution, was the character to be assigned to the head of the State. A republican central power would lead to a republic; the system of single states taking the lead by turns must destroy or cripple all unity in the system of government, and all greatness and power in the nation. If, besides this, nothing is possible but the establishment of an emperor, he would, if the ruler of a small state, be but a very weak central power; if he were the ruler of a powerful state, he might possibly (at least, the honestly anxious fancy so) become dangerous to the Constitution. In what follows it will therefore be proposed: To choose as Emperor a prince, the ruler of a powerful state; but to insist on his giving up his own territory, and on turning the same into one directly and solely subject to the Empire.

'According to this proposal, Germany would constitute an empire consisting of *immediate* and *mediate* territories. The *immediate* territory would consist for the present (reserving further enlargements) of the original possessions of the Emperor; the other coun-

tries, hitherto belonging to the Bund, would constitute the mediate territories. In the whole Empire, the Emperor would, through the imperial Ministers and imperial Parliament, exercise the rights attributed to the central government of the Bund, in the draft of the Constitution drawn up by the seventeen deputies. The rest of the government authority, after deducting these rights, will be exercised—

'*a.* In the immediate territory by the Emperor, through the Imperial Ministers and Imperial Parliament.

'*b.* In the mediate territories by their respective governments and representative bodies.

'1. This arrangement creates at once a real unity, for it provides organs through which the wishes of collective Germany would find expression and practical influence. It affords, in truth, a united political life,—

'*a.* Complete as towards foreign nations.

'*b.* In domestic affairs it secures the same, at least in all those points in which united and common action is indispensable.

'2. This arrangement takes into account the demands of an individual life of the single States, founded on a pretended difference of race; at least as far as possible; that is, up to the point beyond

which no concessions can be made, unless one is willing to give up the idea of unity.

'3. This arrangement leaves the free development in the future unfettered. If the individual life of the single States has such a right of existence as many assert, it will maintain itself; but should the contrary be the case, the single States would pass over to the united State, without violent disturbances, and by means of a natural growth. It can hardly be a matter of doubt as to which State is the most fitted to be the kernel, the central point, of true German unity. Prussia seems called to this post, as much by the large number of her German population, as by the favourable position, for the end in question, of her widespread territory, and by her historical antecedents. The feeling against the person of the King, and against the Prussian official system, cannot weigh against these advantages. By governing the present Prussian lands (hereafter the immediate imperial territories) from Frankfort, and through the imperial Ministry and imperial Parliament, the specific Prussian character would disappear in a very short period, and purely German feeling arise on all sides.

'The possibility of carrying out this plan, depends entirely on the degree of earnestness with which the nation desires unity. It may be the case, that the

Governments of Vienna, Hanover, Munich, and other places do not wish for real union, nor for any essential diminution of their own sovereignty through a strong central power; but this is at present of far less consequence than the wishes of the *people*.

'Austria is the greatest difficulty at this moment. If its Government wishes to maintain the Austrian Empire, it will probably be little inclined to submit its German provinces to imperial government, or even to accept any close union with Germany. The population itself would have a strong dislike to such submission, and it would be especially difficult to make them understand that they were not submitting to Prussia, but to the German Empire. But one might prove to the German population of Austria, that as Germans they must be crippled or go to ruin, if separated from Germany, and on the strength of these proofs, the alternative might be offered them, with a good conscience:

'Either, that those States hitherto members of the Bund should, under one archduke, or more, as the King of Bohemia, &c., join the Empire as mediate territories;

'Or, be entirely excluded from the Bund.

'It would be a matter of deep regret should they adopt the latter alternative, but the separation would

only be a temporary one. The growing influence of the existing German party in Austria, and especially the force of circumstances, would bring the German provinces of Austria back to Germany. But if, in spite of every effort (for such should at any rate be made), German Austria would not for the present join the Empire, it would be better for us, as well as for Austria, that we thirty-two millions of Germans should consolidate ourselves firmly round the Prussian centre, keeping the entrance open for German Austria, than that we should maintain a tottering unsatisfactory union with seven millions of Germans and a majority of Slaves, and thus remain doomed to an inglorious miserable national life.

'As far as the other Governments besides Austria are concerned, the Hanoverian, of all the German Governments, has probably the least hold in the country, and if Germany wills, it cannot oppose the proposed union. Even the Bavarian Government may wish to do so, but will not have the power. For the German territories given by Napoleon to old Bavaria, have never become really Bavarian. But old Bavaria alone, could not, even if it wished, remain behind for long. All therefore depends on this, whether the German feeling is strong enough to demand a Fatherland in reality, not merely in words, and to resist the temp-

tations offered on many sides through separatist tendencies.

'For the present the affair rests in the hands of the German Parliament, who have to form the Constitution, and who, for the sake of the Fatherland, cannot take their position independent and high enough. If the Parliament declares itself, after satisfactory preliminaries, for the proposal, its resolution will be carried out, and the way be opened to a great future.

'Frankfort, May 24, 1848.'

Stockmar's fundamental ideas therefore were as follows:—

1. The natural aim of Germany seemed to him a single consolidated State under the form of a constitutional monarchy.

2. He considered a confederate State as only a transitory arrangement leading to a consolidated State.

3. He therefore set himself the task of discovering an arrangement, for the present time, which should at once bespeak a considerable degree of union, and prove an easy mode of transition to perfect consolidation.

4. The essential point of this arrangement was, that Prussia should renounce her separate existence, should give her various provinces to form the

immediate Imperial territories,[1] which should be ruled without a special Prussian Parliament,[2] without a special Prussian administration, by the Prussian king, as actual hereditary German Emperor, by means of the German Imperial Parliament, and the administrative organisation of the German Empire; whilst the same organs of the imperial power would exercise over the other German States (mediate imperial territories), the rights adjudged to the imperial power in the draft of the Seventeen Commissioners.

[1] The terms *immediate* and *mediate* Imperial territories were perhaps not well chosen. For, under the old German Empire, there were no lands which were, in Stockmar's sense of the word, *immediate Imperial territories*, that is, only subject to the imperial power. In the old imperial cities, and the territories of the imperial knights, there existed, under the imperial power, something which was, at least, analogous to immediate imperial sovereignty. Besides, in the modern Confederate State, all territories are in *certain points* Immediate Imperial, i.e. subject immediately to the central power. But the word Immediate Imperial territory means with Stockmar, territories in *all* points subjected immediately to the Empire.

[2] Gervinus adds in the 'Deutsche Zeitung' of June 3, some observations on Stockmar's plan. It is not, he says, perfectly clear to him; and asks whether, when the representatives of the mediate Imperial territories (the separate States, excepting the original country of the Emperor) are present, that would constitute a plenum of the Parliament, and whether there would be also a smaller Parliament, in which only the deputies of the immediate Imperial territories would deliberate. But Stockmar's words do not admit of such an idea. There can be no doubt that Stockmar did not wish to admit a special Parliament, for specially Prussian affairs, or a separate Prussian administration.

5. It was left to the future whether the mediate territories should incorporate themselves in the immediate imperial territories; and to negotiations with Austria, whether her German provinces should enter the Empire as mediate territories or not.

To understand this plan it is necessary to know what rights the draft of the Seventeen gave to the central power of the Empire.

They are as follows:

To the imperial power exclusively belong

a. The international representation of Germany, the right of treaties, and the general diplomatic intercourse.

b. The right of peace and war.

c. Army, navy, and fortresses.

d. Customs and Post, general legislation and superintendence of water communications, railroads, telegraphs, the conferring of patents for discoveries.

e. The legislation with regard to public and private rights, in as far as such is necessary for the perfecting of German unity, and especially on the right of domicile, on citizenship, the coinage, weights and measures.

f. Jurisdiction in the following matters: Actions against the Imperial exchequer; impeachments of the Ministers of the Empire or of an individual State;

high treason and treason against the Empire; high treason against the head of the Empire; contests between the different German States or princes; disputes as to succession to the throne; fitness for governing and regencies in the German States; actions of private persons against reigning German princes, where beyond the province of a national tribunal; actions of private persons against German States, between whom an obligation is doubtful or disputed; contests between the governments and the estates of the single States, about the legality or interpretation of the Constitution of the country; last appeal as to complaints on account of refusal of or interference with justice.

These rights, then, the King of Prussia was to exercise as German Emperor, over the whole Empire, with a Parliament of representatives from all the German States, with an Imperial Ministry of which of course others than Prussians could be members, and with civil service, open to all Germany. But these same organs of the Imperial power, would first exercise over Prussia itself, all the other sovereign rights of the State. If therefore the Saxon, the Hanoverian, the native of Reusse or of Lippe-Bückeburg, was subjected only in certain respects to the decisions of an Assembly, in which those who were

neither Saxons, nor Hanoverians, &c., took part, and to the decrees of Imperial officials who might also be neither Saxon, &c., but in other respects preserved his purely Saxon, &c. Parliament, his purely Saxon, &c. officials, the Prussian was in all respects to receive his laws from an Imperial Assembly, in which the Saxon, the Hanoverian, &c. sat, and see officials set over him, who need not of necessity be Prussians, and therefore might be Saxons, &c.

This evidently supposed considerable self-abnegation on the part of the Prussians. Stockmar's motive in imposing this sacrifice on the Prussian people was, that the latest events had widened the breach between North and South Germany, and this sacrifice was to be the means of appeasing the South. We must certainly consider the prospect held out by Stockmar, that if Prussia were governed from Frankfort by means of an Imperial Ministry and an Imperial Parliament, the specific Prussian character would soon disappear, as too sanguine. We rather believe that it was just this specific Prussian character which at that time made the plan an impossible one, and that the Prussians would have felt challenged to assert this character yet more strongly, if governed from Frankfort. Nearly twenty years of further development, and the great Junker Bismarck, were neces-

sary in order to make the specific Prussian character to a certain degree subservient to national objects, and this was done by means of government from Berlin. With this exception, and if we suppose with Stockmar, that German development tends to a single consolidated State, we must acknowledge that his plan is an excellent one. For under that supposition, two cases are possible; either Prussia absorbs the rest of Germany, or it is merged in Germany. Even in the first case Prussia would not remain what it was; that is, the rest of Germany would not simply become Prussianized, but the foreign elements that Prussia would take in, would partly alter her own internal character; according to the famous doctrine of Louis Feuerbach, 'The man is what he eats.' But this process of the unification of Germany could not be carried through without violence and indigestion. It was otherwise with the course proposed by Stockmar. Prussia would first be pervaded with German elements, would be impregnated with German aims, and would then allow the rest of Germany, to which it would be no longer so foreign, to grow gradually on to itself.

There is one flaw in Stockmar's plan. If we cast an eye over the future it opens up to us, we desire to be set at rest, about the dark side of a single consolidated

State, the evil of centralisation. Extensive provincial self-government, as far as the administration is concerned, would be the right means to employ.

Bunsen, in London, was among the first to whom Stockmar confided his plan. He did so in a letter of May 8th, which we subjoin here, as it is so characteristic of the petulant style of diction which Stockmar adopted when in high spirits.

Stockmar to Bunsen.

'May 8, 1848.

'For yourself only.

'To have communicated with me constantly during the last few months on the affairs of the Fatherland, would not have been amongst the least profitable occupations of your life. For this sin of omission then you shall be reproved. For if you[1] consider yourselves lions, my friend should have thought of the mouse, who gnawed the meshes of the net for the captive. And you cannot deny at least that you are caught. I may here at a distance, and in ignorance, deceive myself; but I could shed tears over you. Where are even now your men? How do you prove that you have heard the voice out of the mountain? Where are your great and pregnant ideas, with which

[1] That is, the Prussians in general.

you can fulfil the last of your missions? You seem to me without plan, counsel, or deeds. Or do you conceal behind this appearance, old wisdom, old cunning, old diplomatic maxims? Then you and we are for a long time delivered over to misery of all sorts. I preached the policy that could save you and us, in good time, in 1844, 1845, and 1846, when you, with incredible blindness, at Cracow, accepted and lost the second battle of Jena. Now we are again concerned in saving you. The King must become Emperor, the Prussian States the immediate territories of the Empire, other States the mediate. At the same time organic fundamental laws must provide, that, under certain suppositions, the mediate territories should become immediate. The Danish King has forfeited his German provinces, therefore they will at once be incorporated in the immediate territories. Only courage, boldness, determination, and energy, can aid us. If you Prussians do not come forward, or if you interfere in a wrong way with the existing and therefore promising elements, you will in a few weeks have used up these elements and yourselves too. Your chief political danger lies in your connection with Austria. If you view and treat this connection wrongly, then Good-bye! Austria must make the attempt to reconstitute herself one of the

European Great Powers. That is an imperative law of fate. Who would venture to predict what may result from this attempt! But in the meantime, Germany cannot wait. It must try to help itself, and build itself up again, with the same quickness. We cannot dance attendance on Austrian slowness and political incapacity. And however desirable and advantageous might be the union of the Austrian Germans with us, in the meantime we 32 millions are enough by ourselves, if courage and determination do not fail us. We will constitute ourselves, leaving a place open for the Austrians, and by this mode of proceeding, decide the building plans of the new Austrian State. Homogeneous elements, animated by enthusiasm, determination, courage, and power, need not fear the world, and can stand up against anything which even England, Russia, or France may say. But woe to us, if, carried away by mistaken views, we now try to incorporate with us the turbid, un-German, fermenting Austrian element.

'To-morrow I go to Frankfort. Pray write to me there at once; openly, honestly, without reserve. Even if I don't hear from you, you will at all events hear from me. God bless you. May He enlighten your political ideas, and strengthen your weak reins. You have but a short time left you to commit mis-

takes; even the possibility of doing so will soon be taken from you. 'Yours truly,

'STOCKMAR.'

Bunsen's ideas were different. He had, shortly before, published his first address to the German Parliament, of May 7th, 1848, in which he had declared against a single consolidated, in favour of a Confederate State; with an Emperor elected for life; with an Imperial Council of the princes, aided by two legislative assemblies. He could not therefore approve of Stockmar's plan.

The latter had, as appears from another letter, criticised the views expressed in Bunsen's address. In connection with this Bunsen writes on May 17:—

'My dear and honoured friend. . . . I yesterday answered you according to my feelings only, but did not really reply to your letter. To-day I must try to explain myself to you, in a few words. I shall do my best—I can do no more.

'I cannot declare myself in favour of your views of an hereditary empire, out of which gradually should arise an uniform Germany instead of the present compound State. I consider this aim as a step backwards. The Confederate State is higher than the single consolidated State. I also feel further, this end cannot be obtained without revolution, and all the dangers of anarchy;

but the other and better form of State, on the contrary, could be settled by a quiet understanding, without any disturbance. As to what concerns Austria, I think that no sacrifice is too great to help her in, at least, pacifying or mastering the Czechs.

'In fact, the views contained in my writing (the address) lie very near my heart, &c., &c.'

Still Stockmar's plan seems to have made an impression on Bunsen. In his Diary of July and August, 1848,[1] he says, that Stockmar 'adheres to the plan which he had announced in his remarkable letter of the month of May,' and then continues: 'The tone of conviction in proposing and developing this plan, made a great impression on me, without, however, making me swerve in the least from my own convictions.' And the programme which Bunsen and Stockmar concerted together at Cologne in August, shows still more how, further on, Bunsen agreed with his views, for in this[2] they speak of the 'condition of Prussia, as the immediate Imperial territory;' as Bunsen in September writes to Camphausen, 'Prussia, as Prussia, can have no political power or political constitution, but only as head of the Empire; Germany cannot be governed from Berlin, and from the Wilhelm's Strasse.'[3]

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 446.
[2] Ibid. p. 467. [3] Ibid. p. 479.

After Stockmar had communicated his plan to Bunsen, he laid it before the King of Prussia himself. From his Brussels days he had been on intimate terms with the clever, refined, and energetic Henry von Arnim, who had been the Prussian Minister there till 1846, when he became ambassador in Paris, where he stayed till the February revolution, and after the March revolution accepted the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs in Berlin. Arnim wrote to him on May 5: 'How I wish you could be here, were it but for a single day! But I am afraid you are not well enough for travelling. Write to the King out of the fulness of your German and Prussian heart. He certainly desires the best for the whole Fatherland, but it is still difficult for him to comprehend that he must submit himself to pressing circumstances, by placing himself at the head of them. You know him, and will understand him, even if you cannot feel that he is right. Your voice has influence with him, and we want voices of weight to support us. It may be difficult to curb ambition, but there is something yet more difficult—one can induce anyone to abstain from a thing, but how force them to action and decision?'

This letter of Arnim's probably strengthened Stockmar, in the inclination he already felt, to write direct to the King.

On May 17, 1848, he sent the King the sketch of his often-mentioned plan for the reconstruction of Germany, with the following letter:—

'Most gracious Sovereign and Master,—In the evening of my life, and in a state of health which forbids me to expect a long continuance of the same, I am supported by the thought, that I have never by any act violated the duties I owe to my Fatherland. These duties embrace love for Prussia, and true devotion to her sovereign, and for more than forty years I have deeply felt and shown both. If I was kept from giving full utterance to my feelings for the Fatherland, as long as the late political constitution of Germany prevailed, recent events have removed all such barriers. Your Majesty is from henceforth the only refuge of the Fatherland, and its salvation depends principally on the discernment, the power, the courage, and the self-devotion of the Prussian nation. Such convictions have induced me to lay the accompanying sketch before Your Majesty, humbly praying that Your Majesty will examine its contents and graciously allow them to be examined by others. I am prepared, with Your Majesty's gracious permission, to answer any questions on them, and I hope to be able to pro-

duce well-considered arguments against the objections which I foresee will be brought forward.

'With the deepest respect,

'Your Majesty's

'Most obedient and devoted

'CHR. FR. V. STOCKMAR.'

Stockmar received no immediate answer from the King. We shall see further on, in the account of his journey to Berlin in June, the opinion expressed by the King on the German plan. Stockmar sent his letter to Arnim to be forwarded. The latter wrote on May 22, 'Your letter forwarded through me, has not been communicated to me; probably because it was too much in accordance with my own views; they did not wish to strengthen me too much against themselves, by the aid of so powerful an ally.'

Stockmar also corresponded with Prince Albert about his German plan, but it met with little approbation from him. The Prince had himself been busy with schemes for the reconstruction of Germany. He had sent one to the King of Prussia, dated March 28, which is printed in the pamphlet 'An Explanation of the German Question, Stuttgard, 1867,' with the observations of the King on it. The Prince, starting from the dynastic point of view, had declared him-

self, with regard to the supreme ruler of the empire, in favour of an elected emperor, chosen for life, or for several years. He could not reconcile himself to the separation of Austria from Germany, any more than with what he called the mediatising of the other States under Prussia. He wrote therefore to Stockmar, that he could not conceal from him that this plan did not fall in at all with his views. His whole plan was founded on the premise, 'that an elective empire[1] (*Turnus*) would prevent or cripple all unity of government and all national greatness and power. And for this reason Austria was to be separated from Germany, and the other States to be mediatised under Prussia. The correctness of the premise required, however, first to be proved.'

This difference of political opinion continued for many months. We may, however, mention at once, that the Prince, even in the following year, perceived, that it was impossible for Austria to take part in any close German union, and that he became an ardent champion of the Prussian plans of union of 1849.

Let us now return to Stockmar as the envoy to the Diet. He had two introductions to the repre-

[1] The German word *Turnus*, as here used, comprehends the elective empire, in fact everything that is not an hereditary empire.

sentative at Frankfort of that power on which he built all his hopes for Germany.

Bunsen wrote to Herr von Usedom, the Prussian envoy:

'London, May 15, 1848.[1]

'My dear Friend,—Your arrival and that of Stockmar in Frankfort . . . has been the fulfilment of two of my unceasingly treasured wishes of two months' standing. Stockmar is one of the first politicians of Germany and of Europe—the disciple of Stein[2]—army surgeon, physician in chief, during the war—preceptor of Prince Albert[3]—then the friend[4] and private adviser of Prince Leopold, afterwards King of the Belgians—finally, the silent guide of the Court of Great Britain, and the confidential friend,[5] both of Lord Melbourne and Sir Robert Peel. . . . Pray go to him directly; after an hour's intercourse you will part as friends. So much for the present. I love

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[1] The date, March 15, in Bunsen's 'Life,' vol. ii. p. 168, is evidently a misprint.

[2] A mistake, as Stockmar only met Stein twice at most.

[3] We have seen that he only accompanied the Prince, when already grown up, the year before his marriage, as travelling Mentor, to Italy.

[4] Rather since 1817, therefore long before.

[5] He possessed their sincere confidence, but 'confidential friend' he was not.

Stockmar sincerely, and he loves me. I have no secret from him.'

And on May 22, Arnim wrote to Stockmar:

'I may also introduce you to Usedom. I am writing to him to-day, to tell him he may confide in you, as he would do in me. You will find him a genuine German, liberal-minded, prudent, and upright man. Confide in him, and help him with your excellent advice.'

Stockmar was indebted to these introductions for the rapidity with which he made acquaintance with a man, whom he not only found to be all that Arnim described, but whom he always upheld as 'the most amiable, sociable, and agreeable' of all the Prussians he had ever known. He always afterwards kept up his friendly intercourse with him. To his more intimate associates among the deputies of the Diet, belonged also the sensible and active old Bürgermeister of Bremen, Smidt.

Stockmar could do practically nothing in the Diet; and, in fact, the main business of that body was to assist at its own obsequies. It was quite unfit to achieve the reconstitution of affairs. And, while taking part in such sexton's work, Stockmar had to appear in the very subordinate position of representative of Coburg-Gotha, which did not even

give him a vote. He was, therefore, but little enchanted with the arrangement. He wrote on May 28 :

'From its constitution, and from the way in which it is managed, the Diet has been, since 1815 to the present day, a miserable, despicable, and despised machine. All Governments used it only as the instrument of a false, dishonourable policy, alike ruinous to princes and people; so that it is considered and treated at present as the true representative of falsehood, of baseness, and of the principle of destruction. The individuals of whom it is now composed, are also, *ad hoc*, not suitable, and the forms in which it must act, even at the present day, make all judicious activity, all energetic, consistent measures, impossible. To belong to such a body is real misery.'

And on May 29:

'As a member of the Diet, I am like the fifth wheel of a carriage. As a private individual and volunteer, I might perhaps have been able to do more.'

On the other hand, the Diet did not occupy Stockmar sufficiently to prevent his making a short journey to Berlin in the beginning of June. He had the following objects in mind, for which he intended to act only as a private individual. From his point of view, of course, everything depended on Frankfort and Berlin acting hand in hand; only that Prussia

should lead Frankfort. Instead of this, the Frankfort National Assembly, which had met on May 18, spoke and acted as if Prussia did not exist; whilst the Berlin National Assembly ignored that at Frankfort, and the Prussian Government kept itself in the background. Further it could not but be felt, that if the King of Prussia was to take the affairs of Germany in hand, a preliminary condition was wanting. He must first be master in his own house, and before everything else, in Stockmar's opinion, it was necessary to put an end to the state of anarchy at Berlin.

The King having heard of his arrival, wrote to him as follows:

'Sans-Souci, June 7, 1848.

'I was truly delighted to receive the news of your arrival here, my dear Baron Stockmar, and am therefore the more perplexed, after the failure of my invitation to dinner.[1] You have entirely disappeared. I am longing to answer your noble letter from Frankfort, by word of mouth. A conversation with you is worth having, for you do not merely listen, as most of us North Germans do, but you hear what one says, and what one wishes, as the English do in such a remarkable manner. Let me know as soon as possible

[1] There had been some mistake about this.

where you are, and come soon to me. I propose to-morrow to you. We dine at two o'clock, and can talk after dinner. Be prepared for strong opposition on my part; though my heart and wishes harmonise with yours; only the means we would use are different. A word in answer.

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.'

The next day, June 8, Stockmar had a conversation with the King. Of its purport we know nothing positive. Naturally the German question would be considered before anything else, and the King would discuss Stockmar's letter with the eloquence peculiar to him.

This highly-gifted prince was capable of enthusiasm for great ideas, but pedantry and romanticism clouded his insight into realities, and prevented him from recognising the worth of objects founded on reality. He was endowed with as little consistency of thought, as with strength of will and determination.

He was not, therefore, equal to any task that required more than ordinary princely powers. He felt this himself when he[1] said to Beckerath in 1849: 'Frederick the Great would have been your man—I am no great ruler.'

[1] G. Freytag; L. Mathy, p. 306.

We have numerous authentic expressions of Frederick William IV. on his personal position with regard to the question of the reconstruction of Germany, as well as the testimony of men who possessed his confidence and even his affection. We may shortly characterise it, on the one side, by the following traits, romantic loyalty and deference to Austria, too high a legitimist estimation of the rights of the German Princes, and dislike of the work begun at Frankfort, because of its revolutionary odour and flavour.[1]

[1] It was to the delegates of the Frankfort Assembly, who presented an address to the King, at the festival celebrating the restoration of the Cathedral of Cologne, August 1848, that Frederick William used the words so often discussed since :

'Do not forget that there are Princes in Germany, and that I am one of them.'

A letter of the King's of December 13, 1848, apparently to Bunsen, is printed in Ebeling's book on Beust, vol. i. p. 109, and is an eloquent exposition of the opinion expressed by Bunsen, vol. ii. p. 483 (German edition), in a few words : 'The King wished to receive the Imperial Crown, but from the Princes, as they alone had the right to give it to him : the one offered him (from Frankfort) would be an insult and disgrace to a Hohenzollern !'

To the imperial deputation of April 3, 1849, sent to invite him to accept the choice, which had fallen on him at Frankfort, he replied, that he acknowledged in the resolution, the voice of the representatives of the German people : this call gave him a title, which he knew how to value, but he could come to no determination without the free agreement of the Governments. Radowitz, who knew so well the King's German policy, describes the following as the highest principle which determined

But at the same time those expressions and witnesses prove, on the other side, as do notorious facts, that the King did not behave himself, as if absolutely refusing the suggestions coming from Frankfort, or those which were made him with the same purport in a national point of view; rather they seem to have had something attractive for him. He allowed himself to be constantly persuaded to the very brink of a decision, and then he turned back. The deepest stratum of his nature revolted against the more superficial impression made on him by those suggestions. It was this inconsistency which most injured his authority and that of Prussia. For the statesman brought in contact with such a sovereign it is a very difficult question, whether it be morally right and politically advisable, to force a ruler so constituted, into a great political undertaking against which his inmost nature revolts. The decision is doubly difficult in a country like Prussia, where in such a case the political circumstances do not require a merely passive attitude in the King, but demand that the initiative should come from him. In the end, the deciding point must be, whether there is a sufficient prospect of

his resolves: 'No pressure on the German Governments. No connection with the revolutionary powers. No increase of the dangers which weigh down the Austrian monarchy.'

the success of the undertaking. It was not the absolute duty of Prussia, at that time, to take the lead in the national sense. And a passive waiting attitude is better than action, when the conditions of success are wanting in the agent himself.

It is true the statesmen who influenced Frederick William IV. in favour of national unity, became only gradually themselves aware of the peculiarities of the King, that is to say, of one of the principal factors in the calculations of success. And they must have felt it was their duty to advise the King to do that which the Prusso-German interests required of him. It was evident that if Prussia held itself aloof from the German movement, the latter would either develope the most mischievous consequences, or must die away. The politician who wished for neither of these contingencies, therefore naturally felt himself called on to make the attempt, and see if he could persuade the King to take the German affairs in hand.

It was such an attempt that Stockmar believed himself obliged to undertake. But the peculiarity of his character showed itself in this, that after the failure of the first attempt, he became at once thoroughly sceptical about the King, and never ventured upon a second, and rather avoided seeing the King; and though he assisted from a distance

the efforts made by others in 1848, he never deceived himself as to the results. It was his way to form a quick estimate of character.

Meantime, the same day that the King received Stockmar (June 8), Berendt's motion had been carried in the National Assembly in Berlin:

'That this august Assembly be pleased, in recognition of the Revolution, to declare, that the combatants of the 18th and 19th March have deserved well of their country.'

When the news of this reached the King, he addressed a second letter to Stockmar, a letter which is so far historically interesting, as proving that the ideas realised in November 1848 existed in the King's mind as early as July, though in a rather different form.

King Frederick William IV. to Stockmar.

'Sans-Souci, June 9, 1848.

'An important question to a true, genuine, prudent German, experienced in worldly matters, and loving the honour and power of Prussia. You had hardly left me yesterday, dearest Stockmar, when I heard of Berendt's abominable motion: "That the Assembly was to recognise the Revolution, and pass

a vote of thanks to the rabble of the barricades." My question, therefore, best of Barons, is this: Should the Assembly accept the motion, are you for the resignation of the Ministry, or for their remaining in office, and consequently for the dissolution of the Assembly; or, lastly, for a mere adjournment? The latter appears to me impossible, and not compatible with the constitutional system. The first appears to me as cowardice, in fact as high treason against Prussia and Germany. The second course is the only one I conceive as possible, and it is perfectly constitutional. It may, however, induce the declaration of the permanence of the Assembly. Then I should publish the solemn declaration to my people, that I remain true to my given word. But on the defection of the Assembly (and doubtless of the capital also), an attempt must be made to frame a Constitution elsewhere, and not with such an Assembly. I should pursue the only legal course, and summon the "United Prussian Diet" once more, to consult with it on its own reconstruction on a broad basis, then lay before the reconstructed Assembly a fresh Constitution, different from the present one, and in future govern with that Diet and that Constitution. I shall besiege Berlin; and I don't believe it would hold out ten to fourteen days. I summon the

faithful, vengeance-breathing people of the country against it![1]

'Send me a few words in answer by my messenger. God bless you!

'FREDERICK WILLIAM.'

The King's messenger, did not find Stockmar at home, and he only received the letter in the evening.

But in the course of the 9th other events had happened. On the grounds suggested by Zachariä: 'Considering that the importance of the Revolution which has taken place, and the good services of the combatants are undisputed, and that the Assembly does not recognise it as their duty to pronounce opinions but to frame a Constitution in concert with the Crown.' The National Assembly had passed from Berendt's motion to the order of the day.

During the debate crowds had collected before the House of Assembly, the Musical Academy, and threatened to enter it by force. This did not, indeed, happen, but after the division was declared, the mob

[1] The King said to Bunsen in the beginning of August: 'Berlin is a madhouse; if I call, the Provinces would hurry up: I hold them back. But there are 10,000 men in Berlin, and 23,000 in the neighbourhood, all animated with the best spirit.' —*Bunsen's Leben* (German edition), vol. ii. p. 453.

gave vent to their anger at the rejection of Berendt's motion, by insulting the Minister Von Arnim and other deputies who had voted against it, as they left the House of Assembly.

On July 10, Stockmar drove out to Charlottenburg very early to the King. Naturally the subject of the letter of the day before, the (now rejected) motion of Berendt's, already ceased to interest the King, whilst the transactions in front of the Musical Academy, which appeared to threaten the freedom and safety of the National Assembly, were foremost in his thoughts, though his aversion to the National Assembly, and the opinions it upheld, formed the unaltered background of his ideas.

This was shown in the following conversation of the King with Stockmar. We follow a memorandum in the handwriting of the latter:

Conversation with King Frederick William IV.

'June 10, 1848.

'*King.* Are you thoroughly informed of what happened last night in Berlin?

'*Stockmar.* Yes.

'*King.* Do you advise the dissolution of the Assembly? Can I dissolve it?

'*Stockmar.* In Your Majesty's place I should not

dissolve the Assembly. I do not, at this moment, see any political ground for doing so; but I do see formal difficulties. For the events of yesterday the Assembly is not to blame; they are the consequence of a thorough state of anarchy in Berlin. I can quite imagine that events further on, may make a dissolution advisable, and even necessary. A Constitutional Assembly, summoned for a specific purpose, can only be consistently dissolved, when positive facts have proved that the Assembly will not or cannot fulfil their task. The power which has convoked the Assembly may in such a case also dissolve it. At this moment the first, the most important, the most necessary point, is to restore public quiet and order in Berlin. Your Majesty is not yet a constitutional King, but only wishing to become so. But whether Your Majesty considers yourself as a constitutional or as an absolute sovereign, in either case the restoration of public peace and safety in Berlin is Your Majesty's first care and duty. I am not a military man, and cannot therefore decide on the measures which are requisite for the taking possession of and the occupation of Berlin. I do not know whether Your Majesty has the requisite troops at hand.

'*King.* I have here in Potsdam and the neighbourhood 16,000 to 17,000 trustworthy troops.

'*Stockmar.* I cannot form any judgment as to whether these are sufficient. This question must be answered by an experienced general. If he said Yes, I would at once publish a proclamation addressed to the people, and on the strength of it would occupy Berlin to-day.

'*King.* Yes, if my Ministers were not such ——! But with the one exception of Schwerin, they are all cowards.[1] What should the proclamation contain?

'*Stockmar.* Only a few words, which I will write down, if Your Majesty will allow me. Something like this: "I summoned a Constitutional Assembly for the establishment of a National Constitution. The events of yesterday in Berlin, prove to my people, as well as to all Europe, that anarchy reigns in the capital, which destroys the very fundamental conditions of this Assembly, freedom of speech and discussion, and the personal safety of its members. To remedy these ruinous abuses, I have ordered the military occupation of Berlin by General ——, so

[1] The King was unjust to his Ministers here. Had he resolved on any energetic measures against the state of anarchy at Berlin, they would not have forsaken him. But it was just the reverse at this time; the King resolutely opposed the necessary measures proposed for this object by the Ministers, because he considered it dangerous to rouse the pretended lion in Berlin!

that the Assembly may continue the work it has begun, in freedom, peace, and safety."

'*King.* And what further?

'*Stockmar.* Nothing further at present. Only the events that may happen in the course of things, can decide the measures which Your Majesty may have to take further on. It rests with Your Majesty to restore peace, order, and safety in the capital; and when this has been effected, it rests with the Chambers to continue the deliberations on the Constitution. So long as we are ignorant of how this Assembly may conduct itself in these deliberations, and what may be the result of their work, I consider it would be imprudent and dangerous for the Crown on its part, to think of interference or of independent action. The policy of the Crown during the present interval, should be more passive, waiting for what may come; and in Your Majesty's place, I should watch the next measures of the Chambers, with determined self-possession, if not with indifference.

'*King.* I am in a terrible position. My Ministers are ——, except Schwerin, who is a courageous man, and Camphausen, who treats me properly.[1] I have

[1] Compare the retrospective complaints made by the King in August to Bunsen against the same Ministers: 'The Ministers threaten to resign, whenever I won't yield. Arnim has treated

resolved to abdicate, if either of two events should occur: first, if they try to force me into a war with Russia, and, secondly, if they urge me to accept the Constitution, which they are now hatching in Berlin.'[1]

So far Stockmar's report.

A postscript adds: 'As soon as I saw that the King would come to no decision, I came away, and left Berlin the next morning.'

Stockmar had hardly left Berlin before his friend Arnim resigned. The latest events in Berlin, the democratic spirit of the National Assembly, the chaotic state of the capital, united in driving him to this step. He retired to Neustadt-Eberswalde, and from thence sent in his resignation. We will give some passages from the letter in which he tells Stockmar of the step he had taken. They are chiefly remarkable as showing how the state of Berlin had

me very badly. He has left dozens of my letters unanswered, and then done the very opposite of what I told him.'—*Bunsen's Leben*, (German edition), vol. ii. p. 453.

[1] If we remember that on June 10, only the Government draft of the Constitution was in existence, that the Assembly had only on June 15, adopted the motion for appointing a commission, to discuss and eventually adopt that sketch or work out a new one,—this expression sounds very like the famous dictum, 'I don't know what the opinions of the Ministry may be, but I mistrust them.' As the King was influenced by such prejudices, Stockmar's advice naturally could not please him, since it did not exclude the adopting of a liberal Prussian Constitution.

affected and imposed upon so eminent, but, at the same time, rather imaginative a man. In fact, now that we can calmly look back to those times, we must all acknowledge, what no one would believe when Gneist expressed it in his most entertaining book, 'The State of Things in Berlin,' that there was really but little revolutionary power in Berlin, and that the King therefore would not have risked much had he followed Stockmar's advice about the capital.

Henry von Arnim to Stockmar.

'Neustadt-Eberswalde, June 13, 1848.

'I look upon matters thus: The resignation of the Ministry will show clearly that, with the present state of weakness and anarchy, every Government is impossible; and it will be difficult to find anyone whom the King can accept, to form a new Ministry. It must be clear to everyone, that this will naturally lead to a dictatorship and reaction. Therefore the Berlin democrats will try to anticipate these results, by attempting an *émeute*, and proclaiming the Republic. This may succeed for the moment, and even last for a time; though one cannot doubt that the Republic will be suppressed at last; for this I depend not only on the material means at Potsdam, but on

the moral means at Frankfort. These latter must be employed to prevent France from interfering in our affairs. I cannot say who is to prevent Russia from doing so. The accession of the Prince of Prussia will put an end to the affair in Berlin; he can appear as a mediator, and gain popularity by doing so,' etc. etc.

On his return to Frankfort, Stockmar, in a letter of June 20, committed to writing the impressions he brought away from Berlin. He says: 'As long as Arnim was Minister, Prussia treated Germany far better than Germany treated her. The abuse heaped on Prussia, and the provocations coming chiefly from the South and West, have incensed her; and the sacrifices which both the Government and people had to make in the Schleswig-Holstein affair, have cooled their ardour for union with Germany. In consequence every Prussian has, in the last few weeks, become a separatist and Prussian again. The King has entirely lost all popularity. He seems to understand the present state of affairs as little as he did that before March 18. Everything depends on the character of the constitutional monarch, in the period of transition from absolute to limited monarchy. Will the King be able to take the leap he is expected to take, or will he fall into the ditch? . . . French radicalism

is at present on the surface in Berlin, and, in fact, pervades the whole of Germany. The Prussian National Assembly seems to me ignorant and destructive' . . .

'One could hardly have imagined in 1831, that in the year 1848, Belgium and its Constitution and Government would stand so high in Germany, Prussia, and Berlin. That the Ministers, who are all Rhinelanders, should take the Belgian Constitution as the model for their scheme, is easily understood; only they ought not to have overlooked the fact, that the suitableness of that Constitution to Belgium, would not in itself make it applicable to Prussia; least of all should they have permitted holes to be made in the Belgian system, and those holes again mended with rags, till the whole became useless. . . . The Princess of Prussia is thorough, clear-headed, decided, devoted, and is the one person who understands the extraordinary and peculiar character of the times.'

Things then went on in Frankfort after the fashion of Nephelococcygia. The National Assembly might feel itself to be a kind of reality in the place where it was, and as confronting the state of things in the South-west of Germany, and the small States of middle Germany; but it valued far too highly the power and endurance of the revolutionary pressure through-

out the country, which supplied the air to its balloon; it also undervalued just as much, the strength of the single Governments in the large and middle-sized States, which were only temporarily stupefied and crippled by the revolution. It imagined it could quietly settle the Constitution for Germany, without the direct co-operation of the Governments. But at present it chiefly felt the necessity, till the Constitution was completed, of establishing, on its own responsibility, in the place of the Diet, the continuance of which it thought impossible, a new general German executive power, which was to be its own executive, and should represent a provisional pledge and type of the future German Empire, acting as a barrier against anarchy, and as a check on the possible excesses of the Assembly itself. It decreed the provisional Central Power, on the formation of which the Diet should come to an end. On June 29, Henry Gagern boldly handled, or as Dahlman says, mishandled, the whole matter, and the Arch-Duke John was chosen Vicar of the Empire, after the motion of the Deputy Braun from Cöslin, to transfer the imperial power to the Crown of Berlin, had been set aside amid general laughter.

They had succeeded in creating a mere absurdity, a powerless power, unable to borrow real strength

except from the Governments of the separate States, which had been offended by the arbitrary behaviour of the Assembly, and were entirely opposed to it. It is true that the Governments wanted courage for open opposition. Scarcely was the Arch-Duke chosen, before the Diet unanimously resolved to send him an address, in which they expressed their approval of the choice, coupled with the assurance that even before the conclusion of the deliberations concerning the formation of a Provisional Central Power, they were authorised to declare themselves in his favour, and with the hope that he would accept the appointment.

Stockmar writes about the election of the Arch-Duke on June 27, as follows: 'Had I to represent Prussia at this moment, I should try to submit with a good grace. The consequences of this election to Prussia will not depend so much on the character of the man chosen, as on the faults which Prussia may commit with regard to the Arch-Duke, and the events which immediately arise. Prussia must meet the miserable selfishness of the separate States and Roman Catholicism courageously and magnanimously, and must venture it, as to whether her natural rights are granted her. I have an impression that this election of an Austrian prince will, through its

specific character, be rather an advantage to Prussia; for by its results it will show, in the clearest manner, the impossibility of placing Austria at the head of Germany.'

In a later letter of June 30, Stockmar exclaims: 'What will happen, now that we approach the arrangement of a definite state of things? It will prove to be nothing but a miserable provisional settlement. Unity, even such as is possible with us, the German fools won't have. A federation would destroy in this great nation, all power, greatness, independence, and honour.'

We extract from the same letter a short, but striking sentence on the fundamental rights, the discussion of which was at this time impending.

'The draft proposed by the Committee evidently mixes up together, fundamental rights, and fundamental principles.'

A letter of Stockmar's of July 5, describes the state of things in South Germany, and 'German Unity:'

'The members of the opposition in Baden, the originators and propagators of German liberalism, are usually all of them men of Rotteck's school. The doctrines of this school, are mostly formed on one-sided, formal, unhistorical, as well as unphilosophical views of the first French revolution. The modern

politicians of this stamp are nothing but shallow, formal, radicals. Add to this the fact, that all the political martyrs, created by the Mayence central commission in the years 1831 and 1832, emigrated to France, studied for sixteen years in the school of radical opinions there, and that many of these men now sit in the National Assembly at Frankfort. This explains why republican opinions spread more and more throughout Germany, and from Baden as their centre.'

'Prince Charles of Bavaria sent his adjutant, Von der Mark, here to-day, to give us the following comforting intelligence. In consequence of the demagogic-republican movement now going on in Baden, the whole Bavarian corps d'armée, 8,000 strong (in Baden), is utterly disorganised. There is no idea of discipline left; the privates will no longer obey, and every day no inconsiderable number cross the Swiss frontier, with accoutrements, bag and baggage, to serve under Hecker's flag. He continues to gather people together, for drill—must already have 2,500 men, among whom are many trained and well-armed soldiers. He (Prince Charles) therefore wishes for permission to withdraw the whole Bavarian corps from Baden, before it is entirely dissolved by the prevailing political epidemic. It was proposed in the Diet to accede to this request, and to replace the Bavarians by

Würtemberg troops. The Würtemberg deputy, however, raised an objection to this, fearing to expose the still politically healthy Würtemberg soldiers to the same infection. This altercation brought back the old days of the Empire of ninety years ago! And yet, well-disposed and sensible people still tell me of the possibility of keeping thirty-eight States in the middle of Europe, surrounded by enemies, united by ties, which need only to be drawn a little closer than those of the present Union; which is in fact no Union at all. If my two months' session in the Diet has been of no other use, it has at least shown me that there exists between all the members, nothing but mistrust, hatred, envy, backbiting, and delight in each other's misfortunes. Not one of them would help the other, but they are all ready enough to injure each other.'

A passage from a letter of July 11, belongs to the same line of thought:

'For the last forty years it has been an axiom with me, that the German Governments must either, from self-interested motives, create some strong central power, or fall into a state of anarchy. That it is impossible for small sovereigns in certain times, to fulfil by their own power, the first duties of a State—defence of property and of the individual—has been lost sight of by the multitude during the long period

of peace. And the very divisions that made us so weak, gave rise among the Governments to a false belief in their own strength, and state of security as against their own subjects. They imagined revolutions could only take place in single States at a time, and the quiet and safe States could help their neighbour. Now, however, we see that none of them can help the other.'

On the 12th July, the chosen Vicar of the Empire arrived in Frankfort. The Diet resolved to invite him through a deputation to appear amongst them, 'in order to receive the executive power of the constitutional rights and duties, which had belonged to the Diet, and were now, in the name of the German Governments to be transferred to the Provisional Central Power, respectively to be placed in the hands of his Imperial Highness, as Vicar of the German Empire; with the assurance to be given at the same time by the Diet, as the organ of those Governments, that they would joyfully offer to the Central Power, their co-operation for all purposes calculated to found and strengthen the power of Germany, both at home and abroad.'

In this last sitting of the Diet, but before the act of solemn surrender, must be placed a remarkable announcement of Stockmar's. For an account of it

we are indebted to the recollections kindly sent us by Count Usedom, who was not himself present in the sitting, before the act of solemn surrender, but who appeals to the testimony of the late Bürgermeister Smidt.

Stockmar had hardly ever spoken in the Diet. After the surrender of power, and the dissolution of the Bund had been decreed, he made, to the extreme astonishment of all the members, the following announcement, with the greatest determination: 'Now was the time, after the dissolution of the Diet, for the separate Governments, especially the smaller ones, to acknowledge themselves as impossible and superfluous, and that they must sacrifice themselves for the greatness of the whole of Germany. This would be a patriotic task, and the only worthy conclusion of the Diet.'

We give these words as they were reported to us. We are inclined to suspect that Stockmar, who held fast to his plan of the previous May, specially alluded to Prussia and its German vocation.

It was characteristic of Stockmar to choose just the last sitting of the Diet, for such an outburst of his feelings in favour of unity.

After the dissolution of the Diet, and the accession of the Central Power, the German Governments named plenipotentiaries to the latter; but

Stockmar had no desire to undertake the further representation of Coburg. The possibility of new official activity presented itself to him in another form. He was sounded as to his willingness to undertake the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On July 5 he writes: 'Anyone who at sixty years of age, with gout in the stomach, undertook the place of sick-nurse to Germania in her infectious fever, must be simply mad.' His physical inability to write much, made him unable to undertake that office. On July 11 he mentions in a letter, that he had declined the appointment in the most decided manner, but had offered, in case Germany should temporarily want an agent, to conduct negotiations concerning its neighbourly and international relations with Belgium, to undertake the task.

However little Stockmar might feel himself able to accept the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he must have been gratified by the expressions, called forth on various sides by the report that he would allow himself to be persuaded to do so. The 'Deutsche Zeitung' of July 9 had a leading article (apparently by Gervinus himself), which in fact introduced the hitherto but little known man to a larger circle of the German public. It discusses the question, of how the post of Minister for Foreign

Affairs should be filled, and says: 'We know of but one man who is up to the place, Von Stockmar. He is the confidential and proved councillor of King Leopold: this one recommendation may satisfy us. He is of the middle classes, and passed from an active medical career to political and diplomatic employments, and has preserved the simplest, most homely manner; his heart and head are in the right place; he is initiated in all the great European relations of Cabinets and States, thoroughly intimate with the English State from long and close observation, and with English statesmen; personally acquainted with a large number of princes, respected by all, applied to by many for advice, loved by many; only not by Louis Philippe or Russia—this too is a recommendation.'

And Bunsen says in a letter of July 15:[1] 'You need not be told that the articles of the "Deutsche Zeitung" concerning yourself are written as from my very heart. May you but feel the courage to accept such a great and high proposal. I hear from various sides that you are the person in view for the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. You should have seen the look of Lord Palmerston,

[1] Bunsen's 'Life,' vol. ii. p. 189.

when I told him the news as a diplomatic report. "Who is Stockmar?" he asked. "Why, who, but Baron Stockmar whom you know very well." "Baron Stockmar! well, that would be a happy choice indeed. He is one of the best political heads I ever met with."

By July 14 the Arch-Duke had formed his first Ministry. On the 17th, Stockmar prophesies in the letter already quoted: 'The first act of our drama is over; in the second the differences between the Governments and the National Assembly will be represented. This act will, at any rate, be a warlike one.'

Stockmar felt very anxious on this point. He feared that it would be easy for the National Assembly, obliged as it was by the conflict with the Governments to assume an attitude of self-defence, to revolutionise the single States and unhinge the Governments. The South German and Frankfort atmosphere explains how it was that Stockmar, like so many others, undervalued the might and power of resistance of the existing Governments, and overestimated the revolutionary spirit of Germany.

At the same time he had, on account of his decided Prussian feelings, to defend himself against some of those, who had for many years honoured him with their confidence. In the letter of July 17, already so often quoted, he says:

'The time is come for me to declare my opinions on this point. I had, as I have before said, firmly believed in the danger of the entire ruin of public affairs in Germany, and it had become with me almost a fixed idea that this danger might be averted by the aid of a sound policy on the part of Prussia.'

'Words after the event are worth but little. But I can refer to a memorandum written in 1846, at the time of the Cracow affair,[1] which thoroughly explains my views, and which at that time reached the King of Prussia. It speaks openly of the faults of the Prussian political system, and of the consequences that must arise from it, in a way people would now call prophetic. I have foreseen the *débâcle*, recognising the real cause of the approaching storm, in the mistaken policy of the three Northern Powers, but especially of Prussia, and of Louis Philippe.'

'I have for years done all that was possible for me in my subordinate position, to open the eyes of Prussia in time, and save my unhappy Fatherland by its aid. I carried on these fruitless efforts during the summer of 1847, in the autumn of the same year, and even in March 1848, but without any

[1] We do not, unfortunately, possess this paper.

results.[1] As, naturally, I could wish for nothing in my German policy that could have injured Prussia, all those who were inimical to her looked upon me as an ingrained Prussian, whereas I am only Prussian, because I am German, and cannot see how the welfare of Germany can be separated from that of Prussia.'

At the end of July, and till about the middle of August, there seemed fresh reason to hope that Prussia might yet take the lead in the reconstruction of Germany. We need only recapitulate here in a condensed form the facts which are amply given in the correspondence and diaries of this period in Bunsen's 'Life.'

Bunsen was summoned to Berlin on July 25, as the Minister wished to discuss with him different important points of Prussian policy. The report had reached him from various sides, that both in Berlin and in Frankfort the idea was entertained of offering him the Imperial Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The 'Times' gave, with the announcement of his journey, the report of his probable appointment, and dedicated to him, by anticipation, a farewell article.

Stockmar had spoken of Bunsen to the Imperial

[1] We regret to say, that we possess no account of what is referred to here.

Minister Schmerling, and had earnestly entreated the former to accept the post. 'When I alighted here (Cologne),' writes Bunsen, 'I saw George' (his son). 'He brought me a message from the old Oracle' (Stockmar): "*Accept.* I have declared that I will accept the Premiership, if you take the Ministry for Foreign Affairs." Seldom have I been so touched and moved by the confidence of any friend. An honourable, joyful activity for the reforming of the loved Fatherland was in prospect; the man whom I honoured as one of the first statesmen of Europe, and truly loved as a friend, placed the highest confidence in me, and thus roused me to a higher trust in my own powers. I saw in his readiness the best security for the success of the great work, and allowed myself to hope that the differences of opinion regarding some important points of the future Imperial Constitution, would quickly disappear when we discuss things and work together, and all the more because he would give to Prussia, as the future (according to his views hereditary) head of the Empire, more than I considered possible, and therefore advisable. My position with Prussia cannot therefore be injured by a political connection with Stockmar; besides this, we are united by the sacred bond of a friendship, which springs from mutual esteem and confidence, which is

eternal and indestructible, because it has in it nothing of personal self-seeking, but is founded on the love of truth, right, and freedom.'

Our materials contain nothing concerning Stockmar's expressions or eventual intentions here reported by Bunsen. At first sight we may be surprised that Stockmar should, in the beginning and middle of July, have declined the Ministry for Foreign Affairs so positively, and in the end of July have declared himself ready to accept conditionally the Premiership. But on a nearer view, it cannot be denied that the temptation to accept office on the conditions offered at the end of the month, was a much stronger one. For, first, if Bunsen became Minister of Foreign Affairs, the position in which he stood to his King, might be taken as a security that Prussia would now co-operate with Frankfort actively and effectively. Secondly, the post of Premier was more fitted to Stockmar, from the smaller amount of attention it involved to matters of detail. But when Bunsen arrived in Berlin, it appeared that no offer had arrived for him from Frankfort, nor was there in Berlin any inclination for his appointment. Bunsen was convinced rather that he was personally mistrusted as too German,

and that they were anxious to convert or supersede him.

He arrived in Berlin at the very time of the excitement of the conflict with Frankfort. The election of the Vicar of the Empire had ruffled Prussia, and now the improvised Central Power, as yet only in the air, invited it to submit its army to it, and to give up its foreign representation in its favour. On August 6, so the Imperial Minister of War had ordered on July 16, the whole of the Prussian troops, as well as those of the other German States, were to appear on parade, to do homage to the Vicar of the Empire, John, by three cheers, and from that day to wear the German colours. The reaction on the part of the specific Prussian element was very strong. Bunsen soon felt the pressure of the atmosphere at Berlin, and of Prussian realities, and as early as August 3, he wrote to the Minister Auerswald, that as the public papers mentioned the Frankfort offer, he must say, 'that in the present condition of conflict between Berlin and Frankfort, he should never think of separating his fate from that of Prussia, whether or not an offer to that effect should ever be made to him.' [1]

In consequence of this determination, several letters

[1] Bunsen's 'Life,' vol. ii. p. 193.

passed between him and Stockmar, extracts from which are given in Bunsen's 'Life.' In them the points which were in dispute between Frankfort and Berlin were fully brought out.

Stockmar was under the influence of the Frankfort atmosphere. It is true that the reigning illusion there, the belief that the fate of Germany could be substantially, and at pleasure, dictated from Frankfort, never mastered him ; he knew well that the real centre of gravitation was not there : it was a fundamental axiom with him, and remained so, that the natural and only saving policy lay in an understanding between Frankfort and Berlin; that the efforts of Frankfort, without the active participation of Prussia, could lead to no durable and salutary effects ; that Prussia must be the centre and leader of the renewed Germany. But the South German atmosphere deceived him with the false appearance of greater revolutionary strength, it made Prussia appear as if more thoroughly impregnated with the revolutionary disease, and caused Stockmar to apprehend more dangerous effects from a conflict with Frankfort, than the results have justified. He therefore felt that advances and concessions on the part of Berlin towards Frankfort, were a more pressing necessity than they were thought to be in Prussia.

Bunsen, on his side, felt the living life of Prussia; something of the Prussian sentiment entered into him, viz. that Prussia, without injury to her own existence, might let the German movement for unity run by her, as water runs from a rock.

It appears that, on the part of Frankfort, the proposal was sent to Berlin, that Prussia should fill up the posts in the Imperial Ministry of Premier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and War Minister, as she liked. In return, she was expected to submit her army to the Central Power, and resign her foreign representation in its favour.

To Bunsen these demands appeared, from the Prussian point of view, as quite impossible. 'Only the establishment of Prussia, as she is, and exists and lives, as the nucleus of the army and foreign representation,' he writes to Stockmar, 'can save Frankfort from destruction, and neither Von Schmerling . . . nor anyone else has taken even the first step towards this here at Berlin. I can never see the wisdom of dissolving and destroying a healthy organisation in order to improve it; I am not fond of Medea cures. No statesman, least of all you, can have expected that Prussia would deliver over for dissolution her unique army, which is through and through a living organisation in the nation, on the

security of a Minister of War, because he is a Prussian general, or on the promise of filling the Premiership and Ministry of Foreign Affairs with Prussians, who might be driven out of office in a week . . . or for a majority in the Parliament, which loves or permits "bold strokes." No! that will never do. You at Frankfort all demand that Prussia should be placed on a different footing from the rest of Germany; and yet you treat her, as if she were on a par with Hanover and Saxony, not to say Schleiz-Greiz-Lobenstein. When the betrothal has really taken place, then treat the chosen bridegroom differently from the other suitors. The bride can trust her honour to him to whom she intends to belong, but she must not try to secure her honour by depriving him of his manhood. Those who wish to place Prussia at the head of Germany, must act accordingly and speak out. Prussia demands less than you imperial terrorists (for that is your name) will give her; but she will not allow herself to be bound hand and foot and thrown into the magic caldron, even were Henry von Gagern himself the Medea.'[1]

From the extracts given in Bunsen's 'Life' from Stockmar's letters, it does not appear how far and in

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. pp. 456, 457, 459.

what way he defended the Frankfort ideas, with regard to the army and foreign representation. Without going too deep into the *pros* and *cons* of a question, which belongs entirely to a phase of development which led at the time to no results, we may conclude that if Prussia had accepted the three imperial ministries offered to her, she would have possessed a solid basis for leading the affairs at Frankfort, and that the danger of having to undergo a Medea cure was not very great. At all events, Stockmar, in his answers, hits on the really important point; that it depended less in the end on what Frankfort would grant or not grant to Prussia, than on what Prussia deliberately and energetically determined to appropriate. But in Prussia, both clear thought and determined will were wanting. In this sense Stockmar answers: 'You say Prussia demands less than you would give. I answer, if Prussia only knew what and how much she wanted, we had long ago given her what was necessary. I can, from experience, affirm that no German prince, no Government, means uprightly by Prussia. But Prussia does not really mean uprightly and honestly by herself. . . . You complain that we place you on a level with Saxony, Hanover, etc. Have you ever had the courage or the wish to place yourself on a higher level with

regard to Bavaria, Saxony, and Hanover? No! You have lowered yourselves.'[1] Bunsen must have acknowledged that these objections were well founded. He had himself, shortly before, written to the Minister Auerswald, that Prussia must 'seize the position of leading Power in Germany, and not remain inactive whilst the imperial power was being formed and the appointments depending on the Empire filled, nor wait to see what might be done in Frankfort.'[2] The question was not, whether Frankfort would place Prussia at the head of Germany, but, whether Prussia would seize that position. And Bunsen himself failed not to perceive that 'there was no safety for Germany without Prussia, and none for Prussia but with and in Germany,'[3] as well as that the influential men in Frankfort, as the results showed, were in earnest, in the idea of giving over the Central Power to Prussia, on the definitive settlement of Germany. So in the main points the two friends were not far asunder. This was seen when they met by appointment at Cologne (August 14), whither Bunsen had followed the King to the festival in honour of the restoration of the Cathedral and the festive meeting with the Vicar

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 461.
[2] Loc. cit. p. 461.
[3] Loc. cit. pp. 455, 463.

of the Empire. 'Monday morning,' writes Bunsen, 'both Arnim and Stockmar appeared, as it happened, at the same moment. It was a painful meeting.[1] Arnim began at once an indictment, or rather a complaint, against and about me. I tried to convince him that Frankfort had acted in an unpractical manner, and had demanded what was unreasonable, and that real guarantees must be offered to Prussia. Stockmar remained silent. At last he began to speak. "He quite understood that men might be of different opinions as to the course to be followed in Frankfort and Berlin; but there was no safety for Prussia but through Germany, and the favourable moment was apparently passed." We were here interrupted.' This short report is characteristic of Stockmar's manner, of his dislike to a war of words promising no practical result, of his objective views, and his fairness, and also of the habit he had of seeing, to a certain degree, the black side of things.

On the same day the King addressed to the deputation, sent by the Frankfort Assembly to welcome him, the celebrated words, 'Don't forget that there

[1] Arnim, in the conflict between Frankfort and Berlin, took the Frankfort side in the most decided way. See his letter to Bunsen, Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 460.

are Princes in Germany, and that I am one of them.'[1]

Of the next day Bunsen reports: 'Stockmar came to me when all was over; he informed me he must go off to King Leopold without delay, and therefore could not accept the King's invitation to Brühl. We now earnestly discussed the possibility of coming to a practical understanding; he told me his points. I then dictated to George the programme in his presence; he expressed his approval thus, "Not another word, and not one less." So we parted; Stockmar starting the same evening for Brussels.'

The programme was as follows:

'The question will probably be soon laid before the King, whether he will, with Prussia, place himself at the head of Germany or not, and probably in such a form that he must answer Yes or No.

'The King ought certainly to say Yes! and in so doing to keep three points in view.

'1. The position of the Princes can become an honourable and secure one, only, if the King places himself at the head of Germany.

'2. Austria itself would find a support in the crisis of her fate, through such a decision. Whether Austria

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 465.

forms itself into a single State, or whether it separates the German Hereditary States and Bohemia from this State, and allows them to join Germany, it can in no case govern Germany, but rather requires the help and support of Germany to overpower the foreign influences within her.

'3. Through this turn of affairs the King would come most easily and naturally out of the difficulties, into which he has been brought by an incapable Prussian *Constituante*. The position of Prussia as the immediate Imperial territory, and the Imperial Constitution offer exactly those grander elements which the King wishes for his Upper House.

'It is desirable that even during the Provisional Government, proposals should be made on the part of Frankfort, according to which the organisation of the army and foreign representation should be placed in the hands of Prussia, as in commission from the Central Power.'

Bunsen then relates further[1] that on the following morning he managed to lay his and Stockmar's programme before the King, earnestly and solemnly commending it to him. 'He had nothing tangible to advance against it, except that it would not be

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 468.

accepted at Frankfort; and it seemed clear that I could have carried it through with him, had I been his Premier. The King put the paper in his pocket, and promised to consider the contents when the right time came.' This account is rendered more complete by a letter of Bunsen to Stockmar:[1]

'I read aloud the four points, and explained them without reserve. Of course, objections were raised; but everything at last was reduced to the one point,—"Proposals from the National Assembly with regard to the army and foreign representation, during the regency, must be supported by the Princes, in order to enable the King to accept them with honour and a good conscience." I asked whether the King held to any particular form? whether collectively? or singly? He said that did not matter; but he could not approve of an usurpation against the other States, against which, as far as Prussia was concerned, he would himself protest.'

Bunsen had talked in Cologne with the most distinguished members of the Frankfort Assembly, and was convinced that, in spite of their best intentions, there would be difficulties in coming to an understanding with them.

'It enters nobody's head,' he writes in the same

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 471.

letter, 'to give over the army and foreign representation to Prussia, which I demanded without reserve. They are all intoxicated with their own personal and collective sovereign-power. They will therefore probably knock their heads against the wall, with their phantom system of foreign representation, just as they did in their useless attempts to command Prussia in the affairs of her army, instead of claiming her services as delegate of the Empire.'

The programme of German policy drawn up by Bunsen and Stockmar remained in the King's pocket, and the time for taking it into consideration never came. All this did not shake Bunsen in the opinions, which he expressed to the King and Count Bülow in letters dated August 19:[1]

'The importance of the times lies in the desire of Germany after union. Life and death depend on this. Frankfort is still in a state of intoxication, but they mean honourably by Your Majesty and Prussia. They wish to place Prussia at the head of Germany, but do not know how to do it. . . . For God's sake, no rupture with Frankfort. After all, we get on a thousand times better with the people there.'

Stockmar returned to Frankfort from his journey to Cologne and Brussels, rather out of patience with

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 473.

the German question. He writes from thence, August 25:

'I am afraid we have a hard school to pass through, and that this time of trial may last long. The whole German people are wanting in the political intelligence and true patriotic feeling necessary for perceiving and following the lessons of history, and for hearing, understanding, and following the opinions of the few wise men, now living amongst us. The true patriots long for union, which is impossible without domestic order and peace, and a mere empty name without independence and power in our connections with foreign nations. Opposed to these, are the dynasties, the bureaucrats, and millions of citizens, who wish for nothing, and are fit for nothing, but the reestablishment of the old system just done away with, therefore just for that which the last four months have proved to be untenable. In this chaotic confusion and fermentation, the result of which no one can foresee, only one thing appears to me to be certain and clearly discernible, viz., that the majority of the German people have most decidedly adopted democratic opinions—opinions which they will retain whatever may be the final issue of the present state of affairs with us.'

In Frankfort, Stockmar continued the life which he

had led during the last few months; the days were chiefly spent in political discussions. To those who shared his views, as well as to many politicians of other shades of opinion, it was interesting and instructive to exchange thoughts with so experienced a man, so fond among friends of humorous and lively conversation. Many came to get at his secrets. The consistency and decision with which he expounded his views on the reconstitution of Germany under Prussia, and without Austria, gave him a sort of missionary sphere of activity, although he never sought for hearers, but let himself be sought out by them. He associated mostly with the parliamentary members of Gagern's party, especially with Henry and Max Gagern themselves, the two Beselers, Dahlmann, Gervinus, Matthy, Simson, his friend and countryman the Coburg Briegleb, and others; amongst the Austrians he agreed most with Andrian; with the Bürgermeister Smidt the old friendly relations continued. Henry Arnim came over constantly from Soden, where he was staying on account of his health; whilst to the younger intimate friends, whom he gathered round him in Frankfort, belonged Franz von Roggenbach, whom he loved with fatherly affection, and who always remained truly attached to him. Among the diplomatists he was most drawn to Lord

Cowley, the English Ambassador to the Central Power, who took an interest in German life. Stockmar's influence may have helped in gaining him over to desire the reconstitution of Germany under Prussia.

The intercourse between Stockmar and the former Baden Minister and envoy to the Diet, Blittersdorf, was of a most peculiar character. That the once energetic champion of the Metternich policy, and of the reactionary tendencies of the Diet, should find himself associated with so determined a liberal as Stockmar, was a curious trick of circumstances. Stockmar had a large heart; he found an enjoyment and delight in intercourse with men of mind and intellect, if their ideas had not assumed a simply utopian political direction. For Blittersdorf, Stockmar had that power of attraction, which those who stand near to the ruling powers always possess, for men who once were occupied in public affairs; and besides this, Blittersdorf's political ideas were just in that phase of development which made Stockmar more acceptable to him. Blittersdorf had a passion for *la haute politique*, and the movement in favour of German Unity, to which he ascribed more force than it was proved in the end to possess, had under this aspect great attractions for him. He saw the possibility of reconstructing the whole nation on a grand scale, and for a time he entered with

zeal into the Frankfort ideas, as a decided centralist and unionist, and was in favour of the Prussian supremacy. On this point therefore his interests and Stockmar's met. Blittersdorf wanted a free vent for his restless energy, and hence arose the strong unionist articles of the Ober-Post Amts Newspaper, signed ≡; in which the pretensions to omnipotence of the Provisional Imperial Power and the National Assembly, were energetically upheld.

Various reports floated about as to Stockmar's share in these articles; and Bunsen speaks in a letter to Stockmar, of the way in which the latter wielded his 'crushing pen,' in the Ober-Post Amts Newspaper. It is certainly true that Blittersdorf showed many of these articles to Stockmar, before their publication, discussed their contents with him, and submitted them to his criticism; and in Stockmar's papers we find various sketches of newspaper articles (but only of those which appear never to have been printed), in Blittersdorf's hand, with corrections in Stockmar's writing. Without possessing any certain information on the point, we believe that none of those articles signed ≡, which excited great attention at the time, are in their form to be ascribed either entirely or chiefly to Stockmar, and that for the contents, he only knew of and criticised them beforehand, but was not

to be considered as perfectly approving of them, as they finally appeared. These articles continued to be published long after Stockmar's residence in Frankfort and his intercourse with Blittersdorf, were at an end.

From the end of August, the attention of the Assembly at Frankfort was chiefly directed to the Schleswig-Holstein question. On August 26, Prussia had concluded the Armistice of Malmoe with Denmark, an armistice which accorded neither with the high-strung national claims and demands, nor with the conditions of the authority, entrusted to Prussia, by the Central Power.

The National Assembly on Dahlmann's motion decreed the inhibition of the measures taken for carrying out the armistice. The Imperial Ministry resigned, and Dahlmann tried in vain to form a new one: Stockmar for one declined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The National Assembly had to stand the first collision with the stern reality, in which it could not be victorious. The majority did not wish to enter into a conflict with Prussia, and how were they to carry on the struggle with Denmark, which was exciting the enmity of all the Foreign Powers, without the help of Prussia? On what could they lean, except on the revolutionary democracy, any union with which was

hateful to them, and which, as the agitation in the neighbourhood of Frankfort proved, was only on the watch for an opportunity for an outbreak? The Assembly therefore consented to retreat, by accepting the motion of Francke on September 16, not to hinder the carrying out of the armistice, as far as it could still be carried out, and to summon the Central Provisional Power to arrange the negotiations for the necessary modifications of the treaty, as well as for a definite peace. On the 18th an insurrection broke out in Frankfort, for which this motion furnished the pretext; and Auerswald and Lichnowsky fell victims to an infatuated and maddened crowd. On the 24th, the former Imperial Ministry was reconstituted with some modifications. We give the most important passages in Stockmar's correspondence on this critical time:

'September 9, 1848.

'Dahlmann, who altogether disapproved of the conditions of the armistice concluded by Prussia, forced the Ministers to resign, by the impression produced on the Assembly by his passionate harangue.

'The state of things seems to me to be this. The Vicar of the Empire and the National Assembly have no right to ratify the armistice, for this right is not reserved in the power entrusted to Prussia.

The National Assembly can therefore only annul the armistice, because Prussia has not exactly fulfilled the conditions on which she was entrusted with that power. Monday or Tuesday next will decide whether the Assembly will annul it; but, meantime, Prussia, Hanover, &c., will, as far as it rests with them, carry out the armistice. What means has the National Assembly of hindering this, or of carrying on the war without the aid of Prussia? Supposing a quarrel arose from this question between Frankfort and Prussia, would not all the Foreign Powers take part with the latter? and what consequences might not this quarrel have for the internal affairs of Germany?

'My idea was, to do nothing from this place against the armistice, but to begin at once negotiations for peace, under the mediation of England; and to try whether it be not possible to come to an agreement which might to a certain degree satisfy the Duchies and Germany. I say to a certain degree; for if Denmark was really guilty of considerable injustice to the Duchies, yet on the part of Germany, the war was begun in a foolish and wrong manner. If Germany wished to uphold the Duchies in a judicious way, she ought to have taken on herself to negotiate and mediate in their favour,

announcing at the same time to Denmark and her allies, that unless justice were done to the Duchies, she understood how to assert their rights by the sword. Instead of this, Germany opened this lawsuit by an execution.'

'Yesterday the Vicar of the Empire sent for me, to consult me on the difficulties of the situation. My advice was, to make an attempt as soon as possible, to arrange the negotiations for peace, under the mediation of England. For this purpose he must recall his late Ministry, and in doing so make as little change in the individuals as possible. Considerable changes would probably cause as many difficulties, as the creation of a perfectly new Cabinet. As Prince Leiningen wished to retire, the only change necessary seemed to be in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Heckscher had had no success in this business, or in the National Assembly generally, and I therefore proposed for this place Senator Banks, who has been for some months in England, who for the last five months, has taken part in the whole Schleswig-Holstein affair, and thoroughly knows both persons and things, and is an upright sensible man. If therefore both Leiningen and Heckscher retire, Beckerath, a mild and honest man, might undertake the Premiership, and Banks, Foreign Affairs. The Vicar of the

Empire at once agreed to these proposals, and said he thought he might carry them out with Leiningen's assistance, whom he would at once consult. Some time afterwards Leiningen came to me from the Archduke. He spoke of difficulties in the way of carrying out my plan; he did not know whether the former Ministry were inclined to take office again, he had not sounded his colleagues on the point. He appeared to me to think that Heckscher had no wish to give up his place, and it would touch his (Leiningen's) honour to retire with Heckscher alone, as it might appear to the public, as if they only had been in fault about the armistice, and were therefore driven out of the Cabinet.'

This ministerial crisis gave Stockmar several opportunities of seeing the Archduke, and of making personal observations concerning him, which he relates in several of his letters:

'September 16.

'I do not think that as a statesman he is equal to his present position. He rather seems to me to have himself the feeling, that he is here in a false position, and is not able to fulfil satisfactorily the task he has undertaken. This feeling appears to me to arise principally, from the doubts which the old gentleman

may feel as to an important question, namely, whether Austria would really be able to enter the new German union under the same conditions as the other German States. To this must be added, that since he arrived here, no one has shown him the friendly feeling and confidence, which the willingness with which he came, ought to have called out. Here, too, he has to accustom himself to a very different sort of life, which begins to be very distasteful to him, and to Baroness Brandhof. That he follows any plans for his personal advantage at the expense of Austria, I do not in the least believe.[1] As things stand at present, the wish to retire[2] might easily wake in him; and this all the sooner, if a prospect could be opened, on the one hand, of a practical arrangement of German affairs, and on the other, of a satisfactory settlement of the relations of Austria to Germany, as both these are points of honour with the old man.'

'For our internal reorganisation the principal question at present is: Must Austria leave the German Empire or not? The Slave elements gain increasing preponderance, and the necessity for Austria to leave

[1] Many suspected him of speculating on the dissolution of Austria for his own objects.

[2] According to Stockmar's ideas, the line of policy for Prussia was to awaken such a wish in him.

Germany, seems to me, to become more and more evident. I presuppose, of course, that Prussia will place herself immediately at the head of affairs here, and make common cause with the National Assembly. This is the more necessary, as a Government has come forward already, which will seize the helm, should Prussia hesitate to do so. Bavaria has announced to the Central Power, that it will defer in everything to the decrees necessary for the unity of Germany. It is evidently speculating on the probability of Prussia breaking with the National Assembly.'

'8 P.M.

'The National Assembly has adopted Francke's amendment on the question of the armistice, a back door by which they hope to get out of their embarrassments. The greatest difficulty now will be, how to form a Ministry quickly. The Archduke seems to be helpless. Blittersdorf has proposed to him to form a pre-eminently Prussian Ministry, so that the Vicar of the Empire should send plenipotentiaries to Berlin, come to a formal understanding with the Government there, and openly ask them for Ministers. But this proposal seems too decisive and strong for the Archduke's Austrian nature: he says, he is not opposed to an understanding with Prussia, and will himself do his best to bring it about, but he

has no wish to give himself over body and soul to Prussia.'

In another letter of Stockmar's, the Archduke's manner with his Ministers is thus described: 'He remains quiet, listens to the Ministers, but does not show his colours. Involuntarily one thinks of what Gustave Freytag relates in his 'Life of Matthy,' that the Vicar of the Empire, when pressed in council to express his views, would take refuge in saying: 'I have no views at all.'[1]

Stockmar had intended to leave for Coburg at this time, but was detained by the insurrection of the 18th.

The two days, the 18th and 19th, brought him into nearer intercourse with the Minister of War, General von Peucker, whose sagacity and decision he afterwards praised highly. He lost a near and valued friend in the unfortunate General Auerswald. A note from him to Stockmar, describing the advance of the troops called out against the insurgents, which had not been sent to its destination, was found in his breast pocket after his murder, and was long afterwards forwarded to its address.

The events of September naturally produced a con-

[1] In the Archduke's Austrian pronunciation, 'I hob' goar kaine Mainung.'

servative reaction in Frankfort. At the same time the Auerswald Ministry in Berlin retired, and was succeeded by the Pfuel Cabinet. 'The Auerswald Ministry,' said Bunsen,[1] 'fell from its inactivity. Pfuel came forward on September 21, as the man of action. Was he a man of action? I was inclined to believe so, from his early life. But I could not forget that the late P——, who had a thorough knowledge of mankind, once said to me, he is a demoniacal man, without "principle and without trust."'

Stockmar also had made acquaintance with Pfuel at Frankfort, though in a cursory way, and carried away the impression that he was full of German feeling, and perhaps of energy. He therefore felt, that the moment had come, when one might hope that the Government at Berlin would again take the reins in hand, and when another attempt might be made, to bring about an understanding between Frankfort and Prussia. He assured himself of the agreement of the Imperial Ministry on this point, and, after a short stay in Coburg, started, the end of September, for Berlin.

The Ministry formed under the presidency of General Pfuel, of which Eichmann, Bonin, Count Dönhoff;

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 474.

Kisker, and Ladenberg were members, was expected to introduce a policy of resistance to the Prussian National Assembly. Wrangel was appointed Commander-in-Chief in the Marches. He had issued a general order, in which he said: 'My work is to restore public peace in these lands, where it has been disturbed, if the power of the good burghers is not sufficient for the task.' And after his entry into Berlin, he delivered his famous speech in the Park, which contained very decided threats: 'I shall bring the troops even here, when the time comes. Not yet, but they will come. I shall restore order, wherever it is disturbed. The troops are good, the swords sharpened to a point, the balls are in the guns. How sad I find Berlin! The grass grows in the streets, the houses are desolate, &c. That must all be altered. Anarchy must cease, and it will cease.' But the first important acts of the Ministry did not answer the expectations called forth by preceding events. The Auerswald Ministry had fallen, because it would not carry out the resolution arrived at by the National Assembly, on the so-called Stein's motion, which forbad the officers of the army any efforts in favour of reaction, commanded intercourse with the burghers, and sincere submission to the constitutional state of things, making it a point of honour

with those who could not do this from conviction, to leave the army.

To the general astonishment, however, Pfuel's Ministry carried out those resolutions, by an order in which even the Opposition saw nothing to find fault with.

This was the state of things when Stockmar arrived in Berlin; and we will take the account of what followed from a letter which he wrote later, on October 6, from Coburg:

'I returned yesterday from Berlin, where I had gone, by the desire of the Imperial Ministry. It was thought after the events in Frankfort, that this was a favourable moment, to make an attempt to bring about an approach between Berlin and Frankfort, and agreement in opinions and actions. One would have thought that Wrangel's general order was to be looked on as the echo of the new Ministry, and of the dynasty. I found on the contrary on my arrival, the proclamation of the Minister of War a half measure, adopted out of fear of the whole measure. The public impression was that they had resolved to act decidedly, but when the moment of action arrived, both King and Ministers had lost courage. I soon saw my mission could not be attended by any great success.

'Old Pfuel may originally have been enterprising and clever; but he is now too old and absent, and in no way up to the immense task he has undertaken. Dönhoff seems kind, moderate, and not averse to the ideas of the day, not disinclined, therefore, to Frankfort. Eichmann is sensible, and known to be a good man of business. I kept in my negotiations, entirely to these three men, and the result was in a few words as follows:

'Prussia, I was told, does not deny that a moral power resides in Frankfort, in the National Assembly, and the Central Power, which deserves support, as it can be beneficial and conservative both for Germany collectively, and for the single States, and therefore, also for Prussia. Prussia is, in her own interests, ready to place her power at the disposition of the Central Power, only this must be done in such a way as shall not sacrifice the independence of the Prussian State. Therefore it is impossible for us, as long as the Central Power is only provisional, to give up, at the desire of the Imperial Ministry, our independent representatives abroad, allowing ourselves to be represented by an Imperial Minister. We can only give a decided answer on this point when Germany is definitively constituted, and we know what position Prussia will have in the German union.

'I must myself acknowledge, that no one who places himself at the Prussian point of view, can bring forward any intelligent or fair objections against the opinions expressed above, and that no Prussian Minister, either now or in the future, will be able to offer to Frankfort a less Prussian view. I therefore felt a longer stay at Berlin was useless, and returned here after four days, without waiting on the King, or any member of the Royal Family. Probably the King will be displeased at this, but I had gathered from reliable sources, that he still kept to the same ideas, about the regeneration of Germany, which he formerly imparted to me, and which I felt to be wholly impracticable, so that an interview with His Majesty could hardly have produced any results.'

Varnhagen writes in his diary of October 2: 'Baron von Stockmar was here, the Anglo-Coburg Intriguer.' Varnhagen, as far as we know, never had any relations with Stockmar, or with anyone of his intimate friends. These epithets, therefore, are an excellent proof of the levity, with which Varnhagen repeated and worked out reports, that he derived from muddy and very devious sources.

In November, Stockmar started for England, spending a few days on his way at Frankfort.[1]

[1] It was during this stay in Frankfort that the event happened which Bunsen quotes in proof of the false game played by

He had in October been asked by the Imperial Ministry to undertake an official mission on the part of the Empire to London, to join in the discussions to be there carried on, under the mediation of England, on the Schleswig-Holstein affairs.[1] He answered, that, partly his personal relations in England, partly and principally the state of his health, which never allowed him to reckon with certainty on continuous and laborious activity, obliged him to decline anything but unofficial employment. He was, however, willing unofficially to afford his assistance, according as his strength would allow. Such an unofficial influence over the negotiations of official persons, and that in the name of the shadowy Provisional Central Power, was certainly in itself a most precarious thing, and the more complicated the

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Bavaria and Wurtemberg at that time. 'Herr von Hügel (formerly Ambassador in London) showed him in October (it should be November) in Frankfort, an autograph letter of the King of Würtemberg, in which the King expressed his readiness to agree to the hegemony of Prussia; though good offers had been made to him by Austria and the Vicar of the Empire, especially with regard to the position of Commander-in-Chief. Stockmar simply said to Hügel, that the King was in the right road, and should act accordingly.'

[1] Even in September, the German papers announced by anticipation, that Stockmar would conduct the negotiations in London.

Schleswig-Holstein question was, and difficult of peaceable solution, the less could it rouse a wish in Stockmar, to overwork himself for a patchwork affair, to which too he stood in a false position, and without any hope of attaining a satisfactory result. As early as December 15 he writes: 'Whilst plunging into the consideration of the Dano-German business with Danes, Holsteiners, and Bunsen, only one thing was clear to me—that I must take no active part in these concerns. I could as little bear the humiliations which the English, French, Danes, and Swedes, as well as the Russians, will heap on the Germans in this business, as a well-deserved punishment, as I could the boasting of the Danes.' And on

'December 21.

'I had many opportunities of discussing the Schleswig-Holstein business, partly with the Danish Minister, and partly with the Holstein Count Rantzau. After mature reflection, I cannot think of any acceptable proposal. The Danes are weak in one point, in others strong. They seem to me to be weak in the avowal, "The Duchies are necessary for the existence of the Danes," whilst the Duchies maintain, "We have enough by ourselves, and can quite well stand without Denmark." This reminds me of the Dutchman Falck, who in the Belgian affair tried

to get it recognised as an axiom, that Holland had a right to a portion of Belgium, because it required more taxable articles (*de matière imposable*). The Danes are strong through the Foreign Powers, which, from various motives, touching their respective interests, uphold Denmark against Germany. I am inclined to look for a basis on which peace can be founded, in the state of things which existed before the Letter Patent [1] and the war. The bond between Schleswig and Holstein might be abolished; the former should receive an administration, as independent as is possible with the necessary guarantees against Danising tendencies, and the order of succession must be settled. Rantzau argues against this, that the dissolution of the bond between Schleswig and Holstein is impossible, as the inhabitants of the Duchies would never consent to it. The Danes wish for the dissolution of the bond, and offer Schleswig in exchange an independence, which when closely looked at, is merely nominal. Thus the demands are exactly opposed to each other. The wish of Germany to unite Schleswig in the German Bund, I consider an impossibility without causing war. Whatever proposals may be made in the interests of

[1] The Letter Patent of Christian VIII. of Denmark, of July 8, 1848, on the right of succession in Schleswig-Holstein.

peace, none can be made which would be accepted by Denmark, that Germany would not consider as treason to her own honour and interests.

'Bunsen will soon, at the instance of the Central Power, and with the consent of his own Government, make an attempt at peace negotiations. I had proposed the Hamburg Senator Banks, but he has neither wish nor courage for the undertaking. Bunsen is unfortunately *persona ingrata* to the Danes. I regret that he allowed himself to be elected as a deputy in Schleswig, and published a state-paper in favour of the Duchies with his name. He thus stamped himself as a party man, whereas as Minister and negotiator, he ought to have remained neutral in the eyes of the public.'

It was always Stockmar's opinion that the Dano-German Question should be laid aside, at all events for the present, as disturbing the development of German affairs. 'The whole business,' he writes, 'is a real godsend for Russia, a cord by which she holds the young democratic policy of Germany captive, and lets it weary itself out like a bird.'

The German Question, and its first preliminary consideration, the relation of Austria to Germany, continued to occupy all Stockmar's thoughts and care.

On October 26, Henry von Gagern had expressed

the opinion in the Frankfort National Assembly, that Austria could not now take part in the German Confederate State, but must remain in an indissoluble union with it. This thought, though indifferently brought out in the formal wording—

'Austria remains, in consideration of its political connection with non-German lands and provinces, in a lasting and indissoluble union with the rest of Germany—'

was in exact accordance with Stockmar's long-cherished views, which he now felt compelled to explain in a long letter addressed to Henry von Gagern. It enlarged especially on the feelings of English statesmen as to the state of Germany, and of the Continent; but before giving it, we must recall to the reader's memory the events which had happened in November, and which decidedly modified the previous state of affairs.

Early in November, the Austrian Government in Vienna had triumphed over the revolution; the Austrian Diet was adjourned and summoned to meet at Kremsier.

On November 22, Prince Felix Schwarzenberg had formed a new Ministry, and had made a declaration before the Diet at Kremsier, which seemed to announce an approach towards the views of Von

Gagern and Stockmar: 'Only when a renovated Austria and a renovated Germany have adopted fresh and solid forms of Government, will it be possible to arrange their respective political relations.'

In Prussia, the Ministry of the Restoration, the Brandenburg-Manteuffel Cabinet, entered into office on November 2, and the National Assembly was removed to Brandenburg; its dissolution followed early in December, and a Constitution was *octroyée*.

The more influential Governments had therefore gained in strength. Austria did not seem to be averse to Germany forming a confederate State under Prussia; the pressure of revolutionary elements on both Governments in their own countries was lessened, and on the other side, through the more conservative turn which affairs had taken in Frankfort since the events of September, a great proportion of the revolutionary atmosphere which had filled and kept afloat the balloon of the National Assembly was lost, and the power of the Assembly itself was much weakened. On the whole, therefore, the aspect of affairs was more favourable for the union of Germany as a Confederate State under Prussia, if only the desire existed in Berlin to seize on the conduct of things in Frankfort; but only if this was the case.

Stockmar's Letter to Henry von Gagern.

'London, December 3, 1848.

'A certain distance from events generally assists in their objective comprehension and estimation. I therefore perceive since I came here, even more clearly than I did before, when in Germany, the impossibility of including Austria in the German Bund, now to be formed anew.

'The general political interests of Europe, the special necessities of Austria and Germany, evidently require that Austria, as she has long been, should continue as far as possible to form an independent whole. For this, as well as for a reformation in accordance with the requirements of the time, its purely German and its partly German provinces, are indispensably necessary, as elements required to give it life, and cohesion. How could Austria use these provinces also, for making them a portion of the German Confederation? Such a double service would only be feasible, if Germany granted to the Austrian provinces, belonging to the confederate State, the same rights with the other members, and at the same time relieved them from fulfilling all such duties as their connection with the Austrian State would make impossible for them.

'Now, in carrying out the political work which has become ours, each day has its appointed task, on the proper discharge of which the final result depends; and the task of the present day seems to me this, to imbue the majority of the National Assembly with the conviction, that a natural line of policy suited to the times demands:

'*a.* That Germany should be reconstituted, leaving out the Austro-German provinces.

'*b.* That Austria should constitute itself as such, independently, and according to the requirements of the times.

'*c.* That an alliance should be devised and formed between both, which satisfies and secures all the mutual—national, moral, and material wants, which Germany and Austria have always had, still have, and long will have, in common.

'It is much to be lamented, that the efforts hitherto made to give effect and publicity to these views, have met with so little success. For the opposite plan, of again including a portion of the Austrian State, as before, in the German Bund, can, in these days, produce no other effect, than that of leading both Austria and Germany astray from the right road of true self-knowledge and safety, and of making them lose a time, of inestimable value to them, uselessly wasting

the powers of both on a mere impossibility. On the other hand, it is easy to prove that, if Germany and Austria, enter upon the regeneration of their respective States, according to the plan laid down above, they are from the beginning placed in a position with regard to each other, in which not only neither would mislead the other, but in which the work and success of the one, would at the same time warrant and promote the work and success of the other.

'Why these political views have hitherto met with so little recognition and real sympathy, is owing partly to the political incapacity, partly to the selfish unpatriotic feelings, with which the majority of our countrymen may justly be reproached.

'With regard to these views, we have to deal with many honest opponents, and with still more who are wanting in honesty. For we must expect enmity under various feigned pretexts from everyone, who, from purely personal and contemptible motives, thinks it right to take advantage of the various elements of Roman Catholicism, dynastic interests, bureaucracy, and German Philistinism. Besides, we must consider the choice of an Austrian prince as Vicar of the Empire, and the accidental circumstance that the most active and influential member of the Ministry is

also an Austrian,[1] as a hindrance to the successful prosecution of our political plans. Instead of a purely German, we gained in this way an Austrian Imperial Ministry, which brought into the world with it, all the faults of the old Austrian policy. Hence we find again in the policy hitherto pursued by Schmerling, the original sins of delay and waiting on the future, jealousy, falsehood, want of clearness, and an ill-advised egotism. He seems as yet to have pursued but two objects with any result, objects alike ruinous to Germany and Austria, viz., how to hinder every real understanding between Berlin and Frankfort, and how to keep dark any practical future relation between Austria and Germany.

'Well may the true friends of the Fatherland despair of its safety, in the face of so many powerful and united enemies. For we cannot deny, that the means which we can oppose to those adversaries, for the promotion and attainment of our political views, are but few in number, and the prospect of their successful application is darkened by the sight of the difficulties to be overcome. But, in our case, we are concerned solely and alone, with the most self-denying fulfilment of our duty towards our unhappy Father-

[1] Schmerling.

land, and therefore with the most courageous employment of the forces which we possess, and not with a selfish or prudent calculation of their insufficiency. Allow me therefore to enumerate the points, which it seems to me, in the present phase of our policy, to be most important to carry out, and to recommend them to your consideration and active sympathy.

'According to my views, before everything else, it is necessary, that a compact body of the most influential of the Frankfort deputies, should come forward with the open declaration,

'That they had arrived at the firm conviction, the realising of which they would pursue as a fixed political aim—

'That Austria must no longer be treated as a part of the projected Confederation; wherefore it would be their task so to influence the National Assembly, that the most suitable political relation between Germany and Austria, should be pointed out, and settled definitively.'

'I consider as the next necessary step, the formation, at the same time, of a new Ministry, which would adopt the task pointed out in the declaration given above, as a cardinal point in their programme. The Ministry must be purely German in its tendencies; it must regard Austria with an enlightened, true

feeling of friendship, but Prussia with brotherly affection and fidelity. Your accession to this Ministry, either as President of the Council, or as Minister of the Interior, or both together, would be a pledge to Germany that this new Ministry would possess the desired character, and show it by its work.

'The immediate appointment of a deputation of intelligent, well-informed, experienced, and German-minded men to Austria, appears as the necessary result of the measures described above. They must assist in solving the problem—

'Of finding the most intimate possible connection between Germany and Austria, other than by the admission of the German provinces of Austria to the German Confederate State.

'The following remarks may explain more clearly what has been said above:

'In the very beginning of our political crisis, I felt strongly that a renovated Austria ought not to form, as hitherto, a portion of the German Bund; therefore for Germany Proper, everything depended on the impending National Parliament knowing how to assign the right position to Prussia in the new Bund.

'Even after having seen for seven months, how Germany and Prussia regard each other like hostile

brothers; that Prussian statesmen have conducted themselves towards Frankfort like silly coquettish women, and that the Ministry of Schmerling has requited this behaviour after the fashion of the old Austrian policy; I maintain my former opinion. At the present moment all seems to me to hang on this, that Frankfort shall be able to offer Prussia a position which cannot be refused on reasonable grounds, either by the majority of public opinion in Prussia, or by that minority in the rest of Germany, which necessarily embraces all clear-sighted and true patriots. For although we must confess that the general public feeling, throughout the rest of Germany, was continually against Prussia, yet that majority will have little power whenever the possibility and choice is definitely placed before the people, either to see the country saved for the advantage of all, in a manner prescribed by the nature of things, or to bring it near to its total ruin, simply to satisfy an unnatural and heinous hatred. For the real truth of the matter with regard to the antipathy of the rest of Germany to Prussia, and of Prussia to Germany, is, that in a union of both, each party submits to the necessity for its own interests only, and both therefore have to make equal sacrifices. For these reasons, I continue to hope, that a union of Frankfort with

Prussia will produce a state of things, the power and weight of which will defy every attempt at opposition arising from evil motives, whether it proceeds from Princes, Governments, or particular portions of the people itself. Whether at the present moment, there exist in Frankfort as well as in Berlin, the good will and the necessary ability to effect such a union, you are able to answer with greater certainty than I. If you are obliged to answer this question in the negative, more especially because you fear that Prussia is again bent on being faithless to itself and to Germany, then I see the last remedy in the decided action of the Frankfort Parliament only. That Parliament must then, without any delay or further transactions with Prussia, proceed on its own responsibility, and undisturbed by the present state of things at Berlin and Vienna, decree for Prussia that position in the new German Confederation, which it considers will secure the welfare of the whole.[1]

'Under what conditions, according to my opinion,

[1] What effect Stockmar expects from such mere decreeing, he does not say. Things have followed the course here indicated by him. The National Assembly has decreed, and Prussia has declined. That, nevertheless, the decree, as expressing the final conviction arrived at, after a year's deliberation, by the most eminent politicians, has not been without effect, no one at the present day will deny.

an embassy should be sent to Austria, and what should be the general drift of the instructions, you will see from the following paper:

'*Notes for a Draft of Instructions for the Imperial Envoy to Austria, dated November* 12, 1848.

'This matter was discussed in my last visit to Frankfort in November, with the Prince of Leiningen, on the supposition that he was to undertake the embassy. I request that the enclosed papers referring to it may, after perusal, be returned to the Prince[1] of Leiningen in my name.

'The real object of my journey here, requires that I should speak, too, on the opinions of English politicians, with regard to the present state of Germany and the Continent. It has long been my opinion, that the influence which Germany, after it has become free and independent, has a wish and right to exercise on the affairs of the world, can be realised with and through England only. As far as I can see, there is no other support, but England, for the true policy, which the new Germany must follow; and every attempt at looking for another, I consider as

[1] We shall refer to the contents of this paper at the end of the letter.

tantamount to vitiating the whole policy of Germany in its very elements. From my own observation and experience, I can state that in the English Cabinet there existed a traditional desire to rest their own policy on Germany, on the supposition that Germany, strengthened by greater union, would prove a better ally for the preservation of the peace of the world, than any other Power which England could find in the North and West. Hitherto, the realisation of this wish was prevented, by the senility and folly of the Austrian, the want of independence and instability of the Prussian policy, and the total political nullity of the rest of Germany.

'At the present moment the attention of English statesmen is fixed on the danger arising from the fact, that it may be difficult for any chief of the French Government to keep himself in his place without war; and they further fear that the South of Germany, in its present state of dissolution, may be rendered dependent on France, and thus the whole power of Germany be broken for a long time to come.

'To the thought of this danger the possibility is added, that Russian plans may still further complicate political relations, and produce circumstances in Europe which may lead to a Russo-French dictatorship.

'From the very beginning of our German and Austrian difficulties, the present English Cabinet seem to have looked on the incorporation of Austria in the new German Confederation, as a mere fancy. Here too, people are convinced that Austria cannot separate her German provinces from her Empire, without preparing the ruin of her dynasty and monarchy; and here too, they cannot imagine this separation, without the greatest weakening of the coherence of the Austrian State, which would reduce it to so insecure and tottering a condition internally, that the peace of the world would depend on the goodwill of a Russo-French policy.

'But if, some months ago, there prevailed here a complete incredulity as to the success of the political movements in Germany and Austria, it seems that the plan, mooted by several parties, of having one Germany and one Austria, both closely united together, had changed the views of English statesmen so far, that they volunteered their opinion that such a plan was at least feasible. Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston both consider that in this manner a useful regeneration of Austria might be possible, and that through a closer union of Prussia with the rest of Germany, a state of things might be produced, which, depending on a relation to Austria, might lead to a

political system, free from the dangers of a too powerful Empire, and from those of an untenable federal-conglomeration, and likely, therefore, to restore a true equilibrium insuring the peace of Europe. This political combination seems to enjoy the approval of English statesmen, for this reason also, that they fear too close a union of the present Austria with the present Germany, as dangerous to the rest of Europe, and not unlikely to lead to an attempt at renewing a continental system hostile to England. Furthermore, this plan may have the approval of Englishmen because it admits of the solution of the Italian difficulties, in an entirely English sense. The opinion frequently expressed on the Continent, that English politicians intend to weaken Austria or Italy, I consider as totally unfounded; if I am not mistaken, their policy aims at nothing except to make Italy strong against France, and to take away from France every pretext for interfering in the political development of Italy.

'People may differ about what ought to be done in Italy at the present moment; but whatever opinion we may adopt, I should think, that as soon as Austria accepts the basis, that Lombardy should be completely separated from the monarchy in any form acceptable to Austria, the English Cabinet would willingly listen to anything likely to lead to real

results. This explains why the ideas which you advanced on October 26th, holding out a prospect of the whole influence of the Imperial Assembly towards the removal of the Italian difficulties, were so acceptable to the Ministers here, that they asked themselves what could be done for their accomplishment, on the part of England—nay, that they found how a perfect understanding between Frankfort and Berlin, would at the same time subserve the direct interests of England.

'There is reason to suppose, that the English Cabinet has lately become confirmed in these political views of the German and Italian questions. The reports of Lord Cowley in particular may have conduced to this; for after the energetic suppression of the rising in September, he looks upon the Imperial Ministry and the majority of the National Assembly, as the true conservative elements in Germany. Lord John Russell and Lord Clarendon seem to have accepted this view even more decidedly than Lord Palmerston, who is perhaps made more reserved by his fear of the German love of conquest, or a great German Customs-League. Other friends of mine too agree, that the opinion gains in power and extension, that Germany and its monarchies might perish amidst republican agitations, to the advantage of France and perhaps of

Russia, unless the most intimate union be established between Frankfort and Prussia.

'If a close political relation between Germany and England is on the whole possible only on condition of that intimate union of Frankfort with Prussia, a successful attempt at settling the difficulties with Italy and Denmark would likewise take place on the same basis only. In this respect also, it will be necessary to bring the policy of Berlin and Frankfort into perfect harmony. Hitherto, unfortunately, the very opposite has taken place, at least with regard to Italy; for you may remember that at the instigation of France, Prussia seized the idea of taking the initiative as a European Power, for an European Congress, on the basis of the treaties of 1815. Nothing came of it in the end, because the idea found no support anywhere, but more particularly because Russia declined in the most determined way any participation in such conferences. The Central Power at Frankfort, on the contrary, declared at that time to Lord Cowley and here too, that as a *partie cointeressée*, it wished to take part in the transactions on Italy, and by this declaration placed itself in formal opposition to Prussia. Although I believe that the Anglo-French plan of a cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, continues to exist, it is yet possible, that the

English Cabinet might gladly listen to propositions made by a united Prussia and Frankfort. Suppose, for instance, that a closely-united Germany were to say to our Ministers here, "We propose to you

'"*a.* Separation of Lombardy from Austria.

'"*b.* The Mincio as a frontier.

'"*c.* Lombardy agrees with Austria as to the formation of an independent State under an Austrian Prince,—this State (Kingdom or Grand-Duchy) to enter as an independent member into the Italian Customs-League or Confederation.

'"On which account

'"*d.* Sardinia has to guarantee to this new State free access to Genoa; and Austria to allow it as free an intercourse as possible with Venice and the whole Austrian Empire."'

'It seems certain that England would not reject such proposals; fearing that if she did so, Germany might entirely embrace the side of Austria. The utmost they might attempt here, would be to demand Parma for Sardinia, and Modena for Tuscany. In face of such a union of the English Cabinet with Germany and Austria on the Italian question, France also would offer no resistance, and Germany would on this occasion for the first time have occupied her proper position: a circumstance likely to exercise a most

beneficial influence on public opinion in Germany. If, according to what has been said above, a union between Berlin and Frankfort as leading to a Germano-English policy, appears to afford a practical solution of the Italian question, this is far more the case in the Danish affair.

'The letter entrusted to me for the King of the Belgians, I delivered directly on my arrival. I am, with sincere esteem and friendly devotion, etc. etc.

(Signed) 'STOCKMAR.'

The 'notes for a draft of instructions for the Imperial envoy to Austria,' referred to in the letter, are not to be found among Stockmar's papers.

In November, as already related, Stockmar occupied himself with the idea of an Imperial deputation to Austria, in order to regulate the connection of Austria with the German Confederation. The points he then had especially in view, are found in a paper dictated by him, and entitled

'*Points for consideration for Leiningen's and Briegleb's*[1] *projected mission.*

'1. Offensive and defensive alliances, except in cases of aggressive wars.

[1] It was intended that Briegleb, as an experienced lawyer and man of business, should accompany Prince Leiningen.

'2. Mutual guarantee of their actual territories.

'3. Extradition of criminals.

'4. Mutual assistance in case of civil disturbances.

'5. Reciprocity (cartell) concerning the execution of all judicial decisions.

'6. Continuance of reciprocity (cartell) with regard to extradition of deserters.

'7. Reciprocal freedom of domicile.

'8. Continuance of the federal decree against literary piracy.

'9. Continuance of the postal convention.

'10. Commercial and customs treaties.

'11. Navigation treaty.

'12. Guarantee of the fundamental rights granted to the German people.

'13. Convention with regard to those who have no domicile.

'14. Harmonising of railways.

'15. Convention with regard to passing of troops, and their provisioning in common wars.

'16. Possible continuance of the existing common rights of garrisoning certain Imperial fortresses.

'17. Attempts at uniform legislation on patents and reciprocity of such.

'18. Arrangements of annual conferences for the development of existing alliance.

Many complaints had up to this time been made in Frankfort about Stockmar's silence. But now Max von Gagern wrote to him in his brother's name.

'December 18, 1848.

'At all events your long and valuable letter to my brother has set everything to rights, and I must thank you for it most warmly, in his name, till he finds time himself to do so. He hopes that you will trace the effect of the contents of that letter in his next ministerial transactions. He will, in another hour, lay his motion before the National Assembly for permission to treat with Austria, on the ground of its non-admission into the Confederation. . . . Thursday, during the debate on this motion, my brother will disclose his whole scheme, and will stand or fall by it.'

Max von Gagern himself entertained no extravagant hopes as to the practical result of this scheme. He continues: 'It seems that time presses, and therefore a decision must soon be made. If Germany does not wish for a real Central Government, it would be wiser, instead of waiting longer, to return at once to the patchwork, which may then perhaps be still possible.

'Majorities in the Assembly are as uncertain as the feeling of the people. Since Vienna and Berlin have

been able to stand again on their own legs, we have very much gone down here. Besides perplexity makes people helpless and cowardly; it is therefore difficult to give you any reliable hopes.'

By the time that Stockmar's letter of December 3 reached Henry von Gagern, all that he mentioned in it as immediately necessary, was already taken in hand.

On December 15, Schmerling left the Imperial Ministry, and Henry von Gagern formed it anew, according to his programme, announced December 18, that Germany should be formed into a Confederation under Prussia as hereditary head; that Austria should not take any share in this arrangement; that the relations on both sides should for the present be regulated on the basis of the existing indissoluble union; and the further arrangement of the development of the union between Austria and Germany be left to the future.

An article, written somewhat later under Stockmar's supervision and with his consent, and printed in the 'Deutsche Zeitung' of January 17, 1849, describes the state of public opinion, and the behaviour of the English Press, with regard to the German movement for union.

England and German Unity.

'The English are avowedly a nation of shopkeepers: they are the friends of lawful freedom, practical moderate politicians, but they have not only a strong, proud sense of their own national greatness, but also a heart for the manly freedom and political greatness of foreign nations.

'Can one, according to this, expect that the English people should be enthusiastic about the state of things in Germany in general, and especially about the German struggles for unity? The "nation of shopkeepers" as such, loves order and peace; the friend of lawful freedom hates and despises nothing so much as a state of anarchy; every moderate politician must certainly shake his head at the proceedings of many of the German Chambers. Can we expect that all our political stammering and lisping can have impressed England with great respect? Can we expect that public opinion in England, when taken wholesale, can properly know and reckon up all the difficulties with which we have to contend in our development?

'And now German unity! The English saw how this movement began at least in a very irregular way. They did not know what to make of the pre-

liminary Parliament, the Committee of Fifty, the Vicar of the Empire; they were afraid that nothing good could come out of beginnings, in their eyes so revolutionary. The Governments seemed entirely helpless, the different tribes seemed hostile to each other; John Bull saw nothing palpable come of the National Assembly; in the Danish matter he saw them raise the war-cry, and then turning to the other side; recently he saw fresh quarrels of tribes, total disorganisation of parties, separate alliances of Governments, one part of the Assembly for Prussia, yet Prussia not inclined to go with it. I should like to see the honest and intelligent German who, in similar circumstances, would not, from time to time, have lost all hope of unity. How could sober John Bull have confidence in German unity, how could he believe in it, or feel any enthusiasm for it?

'Too much enthusiasm, indeed, one ought not to demand or expect from him, even under different circumstances. John Bull, as you know, is a strong stout man, who has no mean opinion of himself. He suddenly hears that the thirty-eight German Michels, who are mostly so thin and small that he could easily put them into his pocket, are preparing to form together one strong and stout Michel. That sets his back up; he requires some time to accustom himself to

the idea, that these little ones may become something. Such has always been the way with strong, stout, and somewhat haughty people.

'Finally, one must not be surprised that the "nation of shopkeepers," seeing the danger that might arise from a protectionist German unity, assumes a somewhat cool and reserved position, so long as that unity is still unborn.

'It is certainly true, therefore, that public opinion in England is not in raptures about German unity. England has her doubts whether Germania is this time really in interesting circumstances. She contemplates with some uneasiness, the possibility that a strong man may be born, who will have a voice of his own in European questions, and might possibly shut his frontiers against English industry. For all this England can hardly be blamed, for it is perfectly natural.

'But one wrongs public opinion in England, according to my conviction, if one believes that it is decidedly hostile, or passionately embittered, against German unity. England has doubts and fears, but no decided antipathy and dislike.

'One might easily be misled in this respect by the tone of the English papers, particularly the "Times" and the "Morning Chronicle." It is an opinion very

frequently met with in Germany, that the "Times," in particular, represents public opinion in England, and that the "Chronicle" is the organ of Palmerston. The truth is these papers are accessible to two very different influences; they are the willing servants of public opinion, but also the willing servants of this, or that, individual.

'With regard to home politics, they guess, by means of their clever instinct, from whence the wind will be blowing, but they prudently wait till it begins to blow; sometimes they miscalculate, and then they veer very readily. In foreign politics they are the friends of this and that individual, for in general the English people care little for foreign politics; at the present moment the foreign policy of both papers is inspired, if we except occasional whiffs from the Continent, by Lord Palmerston's Tory opponents, and it is often edifying to see how on one and the same day, both papers chant forth to the world the same tune which they have just been taught. From this it is clear, and will soon become still clearer, why their song is so mischievous, scornful, and impudent against Germany. It is no very deep secret, who are the authors of the leading articles on foreign politics, in those papers. Suffice it to say, that in their own country, they are not important and respected enough

for us Germans to allow our bile to be roused by them.

'The English papers, therefore, ought not to mislead us as to public opinion in England. On the whole, I repeat it, that opinion is not hostile to us, nay, a great portion of the educated classes is decidedly friendly.

'Personal observation, knowledge of Germany and its inhabitants, its literature and art, have produced here a feeling of relationship, a kind of friendly sympathy. How, even the public opinion in general, is capable of acknowledging us politically where we deserve it, has been shown by the manner in which the United Diet of Prussia was appreciated here in England; the applause and sincere sympathy were general and unanimous.

'Let us first show to the world, that unity of which we have spoken so much; let us show power and prudence; let us found a manly and legal freedom; let us build a strong unity; and the English people will be the first to greet us with cheering applause.'

At the close of the year, Stockmar had several times to defend his German policy, against the objections addressed to him by several of his high patrons. To one of them he writes on December 8:

'As since February 1848, we diverge in our political views, I take your anathemas as given, although you take care not to speak quite openly against me. The truth is, we occupy at present two different standpoints in politics. I think I can define yours accurately, as a purely dynastic one, in which the remedies for our political difficulties are not to be found. Mine could hardly become quite clear to you, without a special explanation on my part, and this can only be given by word of mouth, with argument and counter-argument.'

He explains himself more fully in a letter, addressed to another high personage. We give the whole passage, because it contains a complete survey of the political views and acts of Stockmar, in the year 1848:

'I cannot know, of course, what may have been told you, about my recent political activity since February 1849. I must suppose, however, that you may have heard much that is unfounded: for I have of late had numerous proofs that many politicians have, for their own purposes, made the most arbitrary use of my name. I was quoted in English, Russian, Austrian, Prussian, German reports, according to the fancy of each reporter. They report things which I am supposed to have said to this or that man, or to have

done, and which, in truth, I have neither said nor done at all, or at least in a very different way. In our times all this is natural and intelligible, and I have no right to complain of it. But I may state truly, that my words and acts during this period, are in complete harmony with the following maxims:

'1. Support of Constitutional Monarchy, as the only safeguard against anarchy.

'2. Consolidation of Germany under Prussian leadership, according to the principle, that if the greatest State does not receive its proper rank in a legal way, it is tempted to secure the rank suggested by the nature of things, in an effectual way, viz., by forbidden means, and to the detriment of the whole.

'3. Consolidation of Austria as a separate State, to be united with Germany in a close alliance.

'4. The reconstruction of Germany depends, to a certain extent, on a quick and just peace with Denmark.

'5. The welfare and independence of Germany require, that the quarrels with Italy should be settled in a manner acceptable and just to the latter.

'An impartial judge will hardly find anything republican or revolutionary in what I have here said; nevertheless, there is something in it, for which I have naturally been often cried down and calumniated.

Did I not wish to put Prussia at the head? This I could not do without placing Prussia over the other princes; therefore I was antimonarchical, therefore republican, therefore revolutionary. But I say that if I place Prussia first, this arises simply from the narrowness of my political understanding. I can see no other way out of it. If there be anybody who could show me a better and possible plan for banking in our democratic deluge, I would willingly leave Prussia, and be equally ready to place the Prince of Liechtenstein at the head. I shall never believe that thirty-eight extremely democratic constitutional monarchies can be kept together by a president or a directory, and therefore I insist on a monarchical head. A democratic confederation of princes, a republic of princes, is to me simple nonsense and misery, as our lately buried Confederation has amply proved. A Confederation in which giants, strong men, and weak little children pledge themselves to equal rights and duties, has in our days been recognised as a mere Utopia.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

ITALIAN AND GERMAN AFFAIRS.

1848–49.

The Italian question, 1848–49—Hummelauer's mission—Failure of the Anglo-French mediation—Secret Russo-Austrian convention of 1847—Stockmar on Palmerston's foreign policy—Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell on Belgium—German affairs, 1849—The attempt at an understanding between Frankfort and Berlin—Letter of Gagern, February 14, 1849—Bunsen called to Berlin—Election of an Emperor—Prussia declines—Alliance of the three Kings—Stockmar at Brussels—King Leopold—Stockmar in England, November 1849—The policy of England—England's relations to France—The Emperor Nicholas on German affairs—His conversation with General Lamoricière—Prince Albert's German policy.

IN the letter at the end of the last chapter, as well as in the paper addressed to Henry von Gagern of December 3, the Austro-Italian Question is cursorily mentioned. Before we leave the year 1848, we shall give some extracts from Stockmar's letters on this subject, which, partly on account of the facts, partly on account of the views contained in them, deserve attention.

We must first revert to the fact, that the straits

of the Austrian Government had in May 1848 reached their height, through revolution, *émeutes*, and hostile aggression; while in Italy, too, the progress of Sardinia culminated in the month of May. The result of this was the mission of Herr von Hummelauer to England, who, on his way there, touched at Frankfort and called on Stockmar.

Hummelauer, a Councillor in the Foreign Ministry at Vienna, had been for years intimately acquainted with Stockmar, who esteemed him highly as a man of experience and information. Hitherto the chief topic of their oral and epistolary communications had been the affairs of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Ireland, and the relation of the English Government to the Holy See. Hummelauer was an influential zealous Catholic, and with such Stockmar easily acquired confidence, because, though by name a Protestant, he was above the formulæ of every positive religion, and therefore able to appreciate without partiality, and from a statesman's point of view, the claims of the Catholics. But now the purely political interests gained the upper hand, and the conversation of the two friends at Frankfort turned chiefly on these topics.

Stockmar writes on May 21, 1848: 'The state of things in Austria seems hopeless. Hummelauer, who

passed through here on his way to London, told me that in Vienna, people are, in the true sense of the word, incapable of thought and action; there was not a single man of any capability. For recent mistakes he throws the greatest blame on the Archdukes. Ficquelmont's incapacity he describes as beyond conception. He hopes better things from Wessenberg. What pinches the Austrian Government most, is the state of war with Sardinia, and the threatened interference of the French in Italy. In order to meet these difficulties, he is to invite English mediation, to bring on a peace between Austria and Italy, on conditions acceptable to the latter. For this purpose his instructions give him the greatest latitude. If this attempt does not succeed, Austria, according to Hummelauer's statement, means to adopt the following policy. By occupying the strongest military positions in the Tyrol, and on the Isonzo, in order to cover Trieste and Istria, it will maintain the defensive, and give up the whole of Italy. As far as Austria is concerned, France may then exercise any influence it likes on the Italian States, Rome, and Naples; even embarrassments, which France might cause to Germany on the Rhine, are on no account to tempt Austria from this purely defensive position. Austria believes it has to found a new empire, which

is, for the first time, to render its old name illustrious; and it will therefore make Hungary the nucleus of a new State, and, if necessary, even place the capital there. As Hungary wishes to retain the dynasty, they hope to be able in this manner to group the other countries under it, and impart to them the necessary coherence. Hummelauer considers an union of the German provinces of Austria with Germany impossible, but he speaks of a republican party existing there, which wishes to get rid of the dynasty, and considers the complete separation from Austria as a means thereto. From all that Hummelauer told me, it became clear that the Austrian Ministers counted on a Russian alliance and assistance; they have no real sympathy for Germany, nay, they wish to buy the favour of England by the commercial and financial difficulties, which their new policy will entail on Germany.'

It is well known that Hummelauer, on May 23, first invited English mediation on the basis that Lombardo-Venetia was to have an independent national administration, with an Italian Ministry at Vienna, and an Archduke as Viceroy. As Palmerston considered that basis insufficient, Hummelauer on May 24 modified his propositions so far that, first, Lombardy was to be given up and left to its own free

will; and, secondly, that the proposal formerly made for Lombardo-Venetia should apply to Venetia only. The English Cabinet, however, declared itself unable to mediate on this basis also, and required that the proposal of May 24 should be so far extended, that a part of Venetia, to be determined by the contracting parties, might be added to Lombardy. Through this, and in consequence of the opposition which the Austrian military party offered to the policy of yielding, the English mediation came to nothing. In July the fortune of war decided for Austria, and on August 9 an armistice was concluded with Sardinia.

Stockmar nevertheless was and remained of opinion, that Austria would be unable to maintain for any length of time the *status quo ante* in Italy; therefore it would be for its own interests to surrender now, when it might still hope for comparatively favourable conditions, what it could no longer hold.

He writes on September 9:

'No one can deny that Austria, after the reconquest of Lombardy, has a perfect right to maintain its territorial possessions in Italy as they have hitherto been. It is another question whether it will be a wise and solid policy, to try and maintain unchanged the *status quo ante*. This point cannot be decided by treaties and mere legal right. Even before the Italian

war broke out, Austria, in order to maintain her supremacy in Italy, required a standing army of 40,000 men. How large an army will it now require, under the present more difficult circumstances? Must it not from one year's end to another, exhaust itself in its moral and material resources, in order to keep its position in Italy? Will the Italian provinces prove a real addition to the power and influence of Austria?'

'December 7.

'I cannot but believe that Austria would in future keep itself sounder, more vigorous, and more quiet, in European society, if it allowed Lombardy to become a separate State, and established certain relations with it, based on the natural mutual requirements of Germany and Italy. This might be done in different ways; at present Austria has it still in its power to obtain that arrangement which seems the most advantageous to itself as a State.'

Austria, however, was naturally enough very far removed from a policy of self-knowledge and resignation. Since its victories, it only thought of re-establishing the former state of things in Italy. It had only reluctantly, after the armistice, accepted the Anglo-French mediation, and then, under different

pretexts, it delayed the beginning of negotiations, till at last Count Colloredo appeared in London, in February, to explain the uselessness of any mediation; while in March, Sardinia put an end to the armistice, and on the 23rd of the same month, the Austrian dominion in Italy was re-established for the next ten years by the battle of Novara.

On the progress of the Italian and Austrian complications in the year 1849, we find some interesting facts and observations in a letter of Stockmar's dated February 19, 1849:

'Last night we heard that Count Colloredo had arrived here from Olmütz, to express the wish that Palmerston might give up the carrying out of the Anglo-French mediation. If this is the case, it is a clear indication that the policy of Austria rests entirely on the convention concluded with Russia in the spring of 1847. There is no doubt that this convention was concluded, at the time when all the efforts made by Petersburg and Vienna at Berlin, could not prevent the King of Prussia from calling together the first United Diet. The events which had previously taken place in Gallicia, the common destruction of the republic of Cracow, had at that time made Austria so dependent on Russia, that Hummelauer told me in 1846, "God be thanked that Russia influences us

now more than formerly, for without Russia there would be no longer an Austrian State."

'Hitherto, I am sorry to say, I have not been able to find out the contents of that convention. Here, too, nothing is known; but that the convention exists, I know from a good source. Under such circumstances, it stands to reason that the policy of Austria, in Italy and Germany, will have a Russian colouring. . . . As a German, I deplore the Austrian dominion in Italy, because it can hardly keep the Italian provinces, without assuming the preponderating influence of the first Power in Italy. This is impossible, without a constant rivalry with France, and forces upon the Austrian Cabinet a continual political consideration for France, such as must stand in the way of its sincere and faithful alliance with Germany, misleading and tempting it. What can we expect from an Austria which, after it has subjugated Italy and Hungary by force, is obliged, for the permanent tenure of these countries, to coquet on the right with Russia, and on the left with France?'

'The idea of a greater kingdom in the North of Italy, has been more useful to Austria, than an army of 40,000 men. No one can doubt that in the spring of 1848, it would have been difficult for the young French Republic to draw the sword for the Italians;

but it is equally certain that the feeling of not wishing to aid in the creation of a political power, which they detested, contributed very much in keeping the French from an intervention in Italy. It was likewise that idea of a North-Italian kingdom, which mainly separated the extreme from the moderate party in Italy, and thus produced a disunion and weakness which was extremely useful and welcome to the Austrians. Now that Palmerston thinks no longer of persuading them to give up the smallest portion of their Italian possessions, France seems constantly inclined to abstain from all interference, so that Austria is more and more confirmed in the belief, that these pacific intentions arise only from the impotence of the republic. Yet I would warn her not to depend too much on this belief. I can quite understand that France does not wish for war, but I do not believe that she *could* not make war if she wished. And the wish may arise any day. What politician, acquainted with the French character, and rightly estimating the dangers which arise from the present form of government in France, could venture to guarantee that, for the next six months, no danger can threaten Europe from the side of France?'

The course taken by affairs in Italy, was a defeat for Lord Palmerston, who had zealously supported the

party of movement throughout Italy, and more especially the efforts for founding a North-Italian kingdom, by all the means at his disposal—words, arguments, and influence; thus making himself the *bête noire* of the Continental Governments, to whom he was already sufficiently obnoxious, on account of the line of policy adopted by him in regard to the Spanish marriages, Cracow, and the Swiss Sonderbund.

The politicians, therefore, on the Continent, were delighted with the ill-success he had met with. This gave Stockmar the opportunity for expressing his opinion of Palmerston's policy, which he did in two letters of February and March, with his usual impartiality:

'February 1, 1849.

'During the last few weeks Palmerston's colleagues were more anxious than they had been before, and resolved and wished to get rid of him, but had not courage enough to carry out their resolution. However justifiable his policy may be *in abstracto*, he is altogether wrong *in concreto*, for his anticipations have not been fulfilled, and the results therefore have been *nil* in all quarters. I have taken great pains lately, to understand his line of policy since February 1848, in its leading features, and I think that I can throw some light on this subject in the following points:

'*a.* Fundamental principle, in which he is thoroughly supported by all his colleagues: Never to employ England's political influence in foreign countries, for the oppression of the governed, by the government.

'*b.* He foresaw the crisis in Italy, and thought he could by persuasion obtain timely and moderate concessions on the part of the Governments, and moderation and thankful acceptance of what was offered them, on the part of the people. Hence Lord Minto's mission to Italy in the autumn of 1847.

'*c.* Minto obtained neither one nor the other. As he was connected with the popular party, he was from the first an object of suspicion to the Governments, and they (especially Austria) looked on him as their greatest enemy. On the other side, he could not persuade the leaders of the liberal party to moderation, nor in any way guide them, but only raise their hopes of active support from England, which support the English Cabinet neither would nor could give them.

'*d.* From the moment of the fall of the Austrian rule in Italy, and the Neapolitan Government in Sicily, Palmerston looked on their re-establishment as impossible, and shaped his English policy as if no one could now prevent the foundation of a great

kingdom in the north of Italy, and the separation of Sicily from Naples.

'*e*. Palmerston was strengthened in this belief not only by his own diplomatic agents in Italy, but by the utter despondency of the Austrians, and many of the Italian Cabinets.

'*f*. From February to the end of June the chief dread of all statesmen, who had anything to do with Italy, was the idea of French intervention. We must not overlook the fact, that Palmerston really thought that he could only effectually influence France, by showing himself in his foreign policy to be the friend of the champions of national independence. Whether the French really meant to intervene, is quite another question. But truth obliges us to confess that the cup was so full at that moment in France, that the least push must have made it run over, and Palmerston not only carefully abstained from giving this push, but did everything by which he thought the intervention could be averted.

'*g*. Palmerston may, of course, have thought, and wished, to give Louis Philippe, Guizot, and Metternich a sharp lesson, by his line of policy with regard to France and Italy. Now indeed, after the event, it appears as if he had made a great mistake, when Austria sent Hummelauer here in May, and would

have joyfully accepted the line of the Etsch, in refusing to accede to this proposal.[1]

'For the last eight days, there have been signs, that, owing to the persuasions or threats of his colleagues, Palmerston has promised "to become a good boy." Lady Palmerston said yesterday, "It is delightful—everyone keeps what he has got." Palmerston has agreed at last to the removal of his most obnoxious agents. The Spanish Bulwer goes to America, Lyons to Switzerland, and the very gentle Wyse to Greece. It is, therefore, to be hoped, that we are now entering on a line of policy, more worthy of England, and more useful to the world.'

The same letter then, by a natural chain of thoughts, passes on to Russia and Austria:

'Russian policy is now likely to leave the side scenes, and step forward on the stage, to take its part in every European political drama. One must admit that the Russians have played their first act, from February till now, admirably.

'Thanks to German stupidity, it was an easy part. The second act will be more difficult. If Hummelauer

[1] This was certainly a mistake on Lord Palmerston's part, though it is very doubtful, on the other hand, whether Sardinia, intoxicated with its successes, would then have accepted the Austrian proposals.

could say to me, as long ago as 1846, "Without Russia, Austria would already have ceased to exist, how will it be now, three years later?"

'You have great confidence in the resurrection of Austria. "The Army." Yes, if it could be kept up without taxes, and if these taxes had not to be voted by Parliaments! The subjugation of Italy and Hungary is possible, but can one think of it as a lasting state of things? The main point for a Government, is always to have people who can be governed. How it will end with the Hungarians, I cannot say beforehand, but it seems to me highly improbable that Radetzky will ever make good Austrians of the Italians. The subjugation and maintenance of Italy, and the transformation of Hungary into a province, render it necessary that Austria should ally herself with Russia. How this alliance is to be reconciled with Austria's claims on Germany, is more than I am able to imagine.'

A second letter of March 7 contains some further observations on Palmerston's policy:

'His hobby is, Constitutional Government every where: and to enforce this, support of democracy, when it puts itself forward, and demands its share in the government! The late events have only strengthened him in this predilection. He said to

me lately, "A republic is a bad form of government; constitutional monarchy is better; but even then so much depends on who rules. If the sovereign rules honestly, this form proves the best; as, for instance, in England and Belgium, where alone legal order was preserved, when it was destroyed in all other States."

'To this leading maxim he adds another; it is this: "Social revolutions are only possible, when the political edifice is in a state of total decay." According to his views, the authors of social revolutions are those governments who refuse to set their decayed houses to rights, in proper time. He maintains that with this view he has, of late years, entreated many governments to make timely concessions, in order to avoid political overthrow, and the social revolution which necessarily follows.

'Though I am of opinion that our man will continue radically the same, I still cherish the hope, that his practical mind will enable him, from this time forward, to proceed with more prudence and moderation, perhaps even fairness, in the application of his theories. It is very true of him, that he who has no success has plenty of opponents and foes. At home and abroad he is accused and condemned, both in matters where he is really in fault, and in matters where he is blameless.

'I complain of the same fault in his political practice, which Pitt made, and which arises principally from an imperfect acquaintance with the Continent. Because certain things are possible, attainable, and desirable in England, according to his views they must be the same in Italy, &c. Now the inhabitants of Lombardy and Sicily, &c. are anything but Englishmen; hence arise mistakes and disappointments.

'To Belgium and its King, Palmerston is well inclined, for in the success of the experiment made there, in the success of King Leopold, he sees the most evident proof of the justice of his own political maxims. He is convinced that if the Ministry in Belgium had been constituted in February 1848, as it was in 1846,[1] Belgium must have been drawn into the whirlpool of the French Revolution, and for a time at least been changed into a republic. He holds up the behaviour of the King as an example, and says, in reference to many of the present sovereigns, "As easily as he understood in good time the meaning of public opinion in his country, and acted accordingly, could you have done the same. In consequence of this discernment and disposition, the King changed his Ministers as early

[1] In 1847 the Liberal Cabinet of Rogier had taken the place of the Catholic Ministry of De Theux.

as 1847, and in this way not only saved Belgium, but the possibility of peace, which it would otherwise have been very difficult for England to keep with regard to France. England has guaranteed the independence of Belgium, and this independence so concerns the interests of England, that were it threatened, she could not avoid going to war, even in our peace-loving days."

'Lord John Russell is of the same opinion: he says distinctly in a memorandum, "We shall try to keep at peace, under any circumstances, unless France should attack Belgium." Such a resolution, announced by a weak Whig Ministry, at a time when Parliament is devoted to peace, even to forgetfulness of the national honour, is deserving of notice.'

We now return to German affairs. Bunsen, who returned to his post in London, in August 1848, had not ceased, in his correspondence with the King, to try and gain over the latter to his German plans. The King, as usual, took a few steps in advance, only to retreat again, when under other influences. In December 1848, he had summoned Bunsen to Berlin, who succeeded in carrying through the Circular Note of January 23, 1849, in which Prussia summoned the German Governments to come to an understanding with Frankfort, which was much the same as entering on Gagern's plan.

Bunsen's delight at the result could not be unmixed, for in reading the remarkable report of his interview with the King[1], in which the latter gave his assent to the Circular Note, one cannot but feel that either Frederick William did not clearly perceive the consequences of that step, or was resolved that no consequences should arise from it.

Bunsen next went to Frankfort to confer with the Imperial Ministry on the Schleswig-Holstein question, and the further treatment of German affairs.

A few days after he left Frankfort, Henry von Gagern wrote to Stockmar:

'February 14, 1849.

'I found your letter most instructive. . . . Bunsen had also spoken openly to me of his opinion, which has long been my own, that I should offer you the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that perhaps you would not now decline it. . . . I most emphatically declare that I am ready to place it in your hands at any moment, if you can resolve on carrying it on under the Vicar of the Empire, and see no difficulty in the person of the Vicar and your relations to him.

'The political position here, can be described in the

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. ii. p. 490.

following sentences: We hope, though not without anxiety, that the King of Prussia will persevere in the new course on which he has entered.

'The Prussian estates will be decidedly German. The Prince of Prussia is resolutely and strongly for us. I continue to demand from Austria, negotiations concerning its future relations to Germany. We hope to carry through here, even against the opposition of Austria, and of the four Kings, the Confederate State, in all essentials, according to the well-known principles of the draft of Constitution, without Austria; with one, two, three, or four of the other Kings. Those who for the present wish to remain outside, must do it at their peril.

'In the next few weeks, the second reading of the draft of the Constitution will be taken in hand. The plenipotentiaries of the smaller States have joined with the Prussian envoy (Camphausen) in a common declaration of their demands. Camphausen is well disposed and resolute, but has not very much confidence in the results. Bunsen has left this with the best intentions.

'Come to my support; I want help; and count on my highest regard.

'H. GAGERN.'

Meantime Bunsen had returned to Berlin on February 11. He relates[1] how he immediately reported to the King, in writing, his thoughts on the further pursuit of the course suggested by the Circular Note of January 23. 'The King,' he says, 'answered me instantaneously . . . . that of all that he would do nothing; the course entered upon was a *wrong* done to Austria; he would have nothing to do with such an abominable line of politics, but would leave that to the Ministry!! (at Frankfort). Whenever the *personal* question should be addressed to *him*, then would he reply as one of the Hohenzollerns, and thus live or die as an honest man and prince. Very soon after, I received from the Ministers the commentary to this utterance. As soon as I had left Berlin for Frankfort, the King had veered round at once; a secret correspondence was carried on with Olmütz through ——. I struggled as I could against grief and indignation. . . . I left the King with tears, silently and with a heavy heart.'

And yet the King's 'no' to the policy advocated by German-minded men, was again no decided 'no.' His hesitation between yes. and no, lasted for many months.

[1] Bunsen's 'Life,' vol. ii. p. 207.

On March 27 the second reading of the Imperial Constitution was passed in Frankfort, and though in many points altered for the worse since the first reading, it was on the whole in accordance with the wishes of those who favoured the Prusso-German union; and on the 28th Frederick William IV. was elected Hereditary Emperor.

On April 3, 1849, the King received the deputation from the Parliament at Frankfort in a state audience in the palace at Berlin, and was invited 'to graciously accept, on the basis of the Constitution, the choice which had fallen on him.' It appears that only the evening previously, the King had been willing to accept the crown offered to him, on condition of the subsequent agreement of the German Princes and States, but during the night he had again changed his mind. His answer therefore, on April 3, was to this effect: he recognised that the resolution of the National Assembly gave him a 'title,' but he could not come to any definite decision without the voluntary agreement of the crowned heads, Princes, and Free Towns of Germany, whose duty it now was to examine, in common deliberation, whether the Constitution resolved on, would be of great advantage to the separate States, as well as to the united whole.

Thus everything was again in a state of uncertainty. The King gave up the advantages which would have arisen from the acceptance of the crown, on the basis of the Constitution, subject to the agreement of the German States. These advantages would have consisted in this: in accordance with the popular wish, he would have assumed the lead in Germany, and would, through the Imperial Constitution, have possessed a legitimate means of influencing the whole of Germany, even the German kingdoms; an influence which, at that time, would have produced some effect, at least upon Saxony and Würtemberg. But the truth is, there were pedantic objections in Berlin to the democratic tendencies of the Frankfort Constitution. Yet even if we admit that these objections were well founded, Prussia had still another course open to it. It knew which of the German States and Governments were in favour of the Confederation under its leadership, and knew that the majority of the deputies of those States to the National Assembly, were of the same mind. With these elements it could, in the summer of 1849, with the impression of its victories in Baden and Saxony still fresh, and before Austria had mastered Hungary, have established under much more favourable circumstances the same union, or even one more comprehensive than that which it

made a lame attempt to constitute at Erfurt, in April 1850, under far less favourable circumstances.

Instead of this they capriciously maintained at Berlin, that the Constitution of Germany could only be established by way of agreement. They wished to obtain modifications of the Imperial Constitution, from the Frankfort Assembly, which maintained in opposition, that the acceptance of the dignity of chief ruler of the empire, presupposed an unconditional acceptance of the Imperial Constitution; and although twenty-eight of the German Governments (all of them except the kingdoms) declared, on April 14, that they accepted the Imperial Constitution unconditionally, and gave their approval of offering the Imperial Crown to the King of Prussia; still the Berlin Cabinet, on the 28th, declined the dignity of Emperor, offered on the ground of the Frankfort Constitution. On May 14, followed the recall of the Prussian deputies to the Imperial Diet; and already on the 15th a manifesto from the King announced, 'My Government has, with the plenipotentiaries of the greater German States which have joined me, again taken up the work of the German Constitution, begun at Frankfort. . . . The Imperial Constitution sketched out by the National Assembly is taken as the basis. . . . This Constitution will be laid before a

Diet of all the States which unite to form the Confederate State, for examination and approval. . . . Only a madman or a liar can, in face of such facts, venture to affirm that I have given up the idea of German unity.'

On May 28, 1849, the league between Prussia, Hanover, and Saxony was formed; the so-called League of the Three Kings for the founding of a Confederate Union under Prussia. Prussia had therefore destroyed the instrument offered to it, and had to prepare another with much labour.

If we accompany Stockmar to the Erfurt Diet, we shall see, in the year 1850, how Prussia retarded the realisation of the League of the Three Kings, till there remained but one king in the league, and how at last it gave up its own work in despair. Already, on May 31, Stockmar writes:

'The proclamation of the King of Prussia had, for a short time, a tranquillising effect in Prussia and a portion of Germany. In order to give any permanence to this impression, the promised draft of the Imperial Constitution ought to have appeared the next day. There ought to have been no delay, even if Prussia must have advanced without Bavaria. What can Bavaria, united with Austria, do for Germany?'

Stockmar left England in the beginning of July,

and spent some time in Brussels, in constant intercourse with King Leopold. A letter written after his arrival at Coburg, shows the renewed impression which the old servant carried away with him, of the individuality and activity of his master. He says in it:

'Whatever form things may next assume in France, I have no fears for Belgium, especially if God preserves the King's life and health, and the spirit in which he conceives his task as a king, discharging it in a manner that is a blessing to his people and an example for all other rulers. He alone, in all Europe, has hitherto done his part to rehabilitate Monarchical Constitutions, and just as much as he has achieved in favour of Monarchy, his colleagues have done to ruin it.'

After a stay of a few months in Coburg, Stockmar returned to England, in November 1849; a change in his position for the survey of the political world, which he vividly expresses, in a letter of this date, by comparing Coburg to the 'little hole in an old stove,' whilst he calls London 'a high watch tower' from which he could command the whole of Europe. We will give a few of the observations made by him from his 'high watch tower' during the month of December. With regard to English politics and the position of England to France, he writes:

'The foreign policy of England, seems to me always the same, constantly suffering from ignorance of the real state of things on the Continent, living from hand to mouth; not so much laying down a principle and keeping to it, as dealing with the difficulties of the day according to convenience and mere expediency. Moreover, there is a very apparent difference between the English diplomatists on the Continent, who hold to the old political traditions and maxims, and the modern policy of the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Palmerston).

'The political friendship now existing between England and France, is really a hollow one. France only holds to England as a case of necessity, by compulsion, and therefore with secret repugnance, well knowing that it is an unalterable and fundamental maxim of English policy, that England can manage France more easily and surely by peace and by friendly treatment, than by war and the power of the sword. It is but natural that Russia and Austria should do all they can to disturb the understanding between England and France; and the French diplomatists comfort their Russian and Austrian colleagues by saying: "Don't be uneasy: nous avons bien une politique à nous."'

Stockmar's communications with regard to the

views of the Emperor Nicholas in Petersburg on German affairs, will not be unacceptable to the reader.

'The Emperor observed to a diplomatist: It was easy to see that by next spring, the state of affairs in Prussia would be as bad as it was two years ago. His brother-in-law at Berlin was a visionary with whom he had no patience. The Emperor of Austria, on the contrary, in spite of his youth and inexperience, had shown a talent for governing. Only how was he to govern his kingdom, composed of such various nationalities, with no common sympathy to join them together? The Germanising of Austria, which was about to be attempted, was as difficult a task as the King of Prussia's favourite idea, "German unity," the pursuit of which he (Nicholas) considered a senseless undertaking, which as yet had had no other result than that of causing violent jealousy and almost serious complications between Austria and Prussia. He felt very anxious about the condition of Germany; it not only obliged him to keep a large military force in readiness against possible accidents, but forced him to keep his frontiers almost hermetically closed, to keep the German socialists and revolutionists out of Russia. His relations with foreign countries were in general as the year before. His

endeavour was to stand prepared for all chances, and he would be ready to help those who needed and demanded his aid.'

'A few weeks later, the French Ambassador, General Lamoricière, before his return to Paris, had an audience with the Russian Emperor, when the latter again gave expression to his feelings on the state of Germany. "The King of Prussia," he said, "has done much to keep up the spirit of discontent so widely spread throughout Germany, and purposely with the view of crippling the smaller German States, and further destroying their independence. He (Nicholas) would stand quietly by; he had no wish to mix himself up with German affairs; in doing so he would only unite Germany against himself; also, he had no desire to support Austria against Prussia, except in so far as the maintenance of the territorial arrangements of the Congress of Vienna was concerned."

'The Emperor and the General agreed most heartily on the question of "German unity." The General has no great sympathy for Russia, but his hatred of Prussia is intense; he would do all he could to undermine the German plans of Prussia, and he would rejoice if Russia and France found here a common bond of union. Notwithstanding the peaceful utterances of the Emperor, the General seems to expect a

war, as the result of the conflict of political views and feelings in Europe, and seems to wish for it; as, according to his views, a war would be the best means of delivering France from its domestic difficulties.'

With regard to German affairs, Stockmar, during the year 1849, had the great joy of seeing Prince Albert come round to his views, in the main points: the withdrawal of Austria from the closer German union, and the reconstruction of Germany as a Confederate State, under the hereditary leadership of Prussia. Strange to say, it fell to Stockmar's share, towards the end of 1849, to have to defend the Prince against the charge of being hostile to Austria, and of having made himself the tool of Prussia; as towards the end of 1848 he had had to defend himself against similar charges.

'The Prince,' he writes, 'holds fast, from sincere conviction, to the principle which you yourself have proposed, as the only compass in these stormy times, viz.:

'That in all transactions concerning the rights of Nations and States, which modern European politics require, anywhere and anyhow, the decision is not to be made according to one-sided interests, arbitrary will or force; but that, starting from existing treaties,

a new agreement is to be aimed at, based on a rational understanding of the requirements and the rights of the present generation.

'With regard to the restoration and new ordering of the political system of Germany, the Prince desires that it might be *possible* to arrange it in a manner compatible with the laws and treaties of all parties.'

'He sees quite clearly that in a real Confederate State, the full sovereignty of the single States is impossible; but he does not ascribe to this any decisive importance, because, in the former Confederation of States also, Austria and Prussia alone possessed a real, the rest only an apparent sovereignty. He is doubtful, in fact, whether at present any internal organisation of Germany could be contrived, which should admit the full sovereignty of the single States.'

'He does not see, therefore, any danger or loss in giving up things, which had only an apparent existence or advantage, and which, under all circumstances, cannot be preserved, even in their mere semblance. He believes that those princes, who, of their own free will, have accepted the closer union with Prussia, do not make any real sacrifices, but only gain a chance of preserving what can still be preserved, and what can still live. At the same time, the Prince sees in the form of a closer union, a

practical means of settling the affairs of at least one part of Germany, according to existing treaties, and a starting point from which to arrive at a similar settlement of what is required for the larger Confederation.

'The Prince thinks it even possible that after settling the narrower Confederation, and establishing a useful wider Confederation, the narrower Confederation might at a later time be dissolved, and the way for the establishment of one Federate State be thus opened.

'Whatever opinion one may form of the value of these political ideas of the Prince, they have at least the merit of being clear and practical, and they show, at all events, how the fate of Germany might be settled in a legal manner. He, on the contrary, may charge the opponents of these views with having only hitherto negatived everything, without making one single practical proposition; nay, that, intentionally or unintentionally, they have produced such a confusion, that in time a decision, by means of brutal force, may become a possibility.

'I now come to the statement—

'*That in German affairs the Prince has made himself the tool of Prussia.*

'With regard to this charge I beg to observe:

'He who dares to utter his own definite opinion on a question pending between two great political Powers, commits himself, not only in the eyes of his opponent, but also in those of the public.

'The question therefore is, whether in these matters the Prince should have his own opinion, and should utter it? I believe that the Prince, according to his intellectual organisation, could not avoid either forming his own opinion, or uttering it. I go further and believe, that his political position here, makes it his duty to communicate such views to the English Ministers. The Prince has done no more than telling Lord John Russell what, according to his opinion, might be a legal and peaceful way of negotiating a narrower and wider Confederation, or, in the course of the experiment, a Confederation of some sort or other.

'Prussia, as such, could not ask anything from the Prince in his English position, and has not done so. The Prince, on the other hand, could do nothing for Prussia, and has done nothing.

'To show from what flimsy stuff such rumours of partiality are woven together, I will relate here what happened to me at Frankfort, towards the end of October, with regard to King Leopold. I was asked by a very high personage, and in a very solemn

manner, why the King was so thoroughly Austrian, and hostile to Prussia in German affairs? I was told that there existed, in Brussels and London, a clique which, inspired by hatred of Prussia, left nothing untried to injure it. It was hinted, that the influence of the uncle might prejudice the niece and the nephew against Prussia. This, I was told, would be all the more to be regretted, as sound policy required a good understanding between Prussia and Belgium, and, as it might easily be foreseen, that in a moment of real danger, Austria would have neither the will nor the power to support Belgium.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE YEAR 1850.

Stockmar on Belgium's place in Europe, and its vitality—Stockmar on the Alliance of the Northern Powers—The German conflict of 1849 and 1850 between Austria and Prussia—The part played in it by France and the Grand Duchess Stephanie—The Erfurt Parliament summoned—The chances of the Prussian Union—Stockmar in Erfurt (April)—His preconceived opinion of Radowitz—The hopeless state of affairs at Erfurt — Mode of dealing with the proposed Draft Constitution—Its adoption *en bloc* or its amendment—Stockmar's activity at Erfurt—The attitude of foreign countries, particularly England, with regard to the work of union—Close of the Erfurt Parliament —Prospects—The Prussian Minister—The Congress of Princes— —Attitude of Austria—Bavarian project for a partition of Baden— Schleswig-Holstein—The Austro-Prussian conflict—Stockmar's views on German affairs—Death of Peel—Stockmar's article on him— Death of the Queen Louise of the Belgians—Death of Louis Philippe —Russia's German policy—Part played by Russia in the Schleswig-Holstein and German questions—An European Congress proposed for the arrangement of the German complications—Olmütz—Scornful attitude of foreign countries.

THE whole position of Belgium, and the question of its vitality, was always naturally a favourite theme with Stockmar. In a letter of January 27, 1850, he reverts to this topic.

'Here (in England) the independence of Belgium

has become so completely a political axiom, that all parties are perfectly agreed on this point. It is hardly necessary to say that, in our circle, an expression in a different sense has never occurred. The proposal to hand over Antwerp to England (in order to win over the latter to the plans of France against Belgium), can only come from people who amuse themselves with the merest fancy, without considering how entirely impracticable it would be. It would be rather difficult for France to offer Antwerp as a sop to England, but that there should be a single Englishman who could bring himself to believe in such an arrangement, I doubt indeed. What I have long felt, I feel now more strongly than ever, and that is, that Belgium can only cease to be an independent State by the fault of its own Government and representatives. But both the King and the Government, as well as the representatives, have proved practically, and in the face of all Europe, the one, that they know how to govern, and the other, that they are capable of taking care of that share in the Government which is granted to them by a truly representative Constitution.

'Were I the Belgian Premier at the moment of an European crisis, the following would be the maxims of my policy:

'1. To uphold the stipulated neutrality of Belgium in the full sense of the word.

'2. To claim for myself the right to interpret this neutrality in the face of Europe.

'3. In order to properly carry through this act of Belgian autonomy, I would set on foot the largest possible military force; firmly persuaded that, under such circumstances, no European Power would think of tampering with the neutrality of a State that could, according to its own choice, join one or other of the contending forces with 100,000 men.'

The unsettled state of France roused at that time many a wish that the old *Holy Alliance* of the Northern Powers were still in existence. With regard to this, Stockmar writes in the same letter:

'All absolute alliances between great Powers, intended for more than a special and clearly defined object, appear to me dangerous. They generally lead to great political errors and to an unjust dictatorship. As long as there was one great cause, one definite object, namely, the overthrow of Napoleon, such an absolute alliance seemed good to me. But from the moment that its specific and palpable object was gone, and it was directed against something general and invisible, against a spiritual demon, whom everybody sees, feels, and understands according to

his own fancy, I have become very doubtful as to its value. The object is now said to be, the protection of States against that disorganisation which is threatened by democracy, republicanism, socialism, &c. I find the protection of which States stand in need, in the application of moral remedies chiefly. The spirits which are to be coerced can, according to my opinion, be coerced only, if one satisfies, by means of institutions in accordance with the requirements of the times, the sense of right in the majority of the nation; thus strengthening and fostering it. But the absolute character of the alliance, makes the application of such moral remedies impossible; for how can three Governments of nations, each possessing a different degree of civilisation, agree on one and the same principle, applicable to these different degrees of civilisation? This is against the nature of things; therefore, the very thing that is absolutely necessary to these States, cannot be produced by them, as long as they are bound together by an absolute alliance; any more than a mule can have young ones. Under present conditions, they can only combine their material powers, in order to quell spiritual demons by physical force. It thus happens necessarily, that the allies lose time, are kept from the right remedies for the cure of the evil, and deceive themselves and the

world by apparent successes, which last for a short time only.'

An immediate danger of the formation of a new Holy Alliance, however, did not exist at the beginning of the year 1850. On the contrary, people in Prussia came nearer and nearer to the Rubicon, on the other side of which lay the solution of the German question, and the conflict with Austria.

It is generally known that Louis Napoleon thought it in his own interest to foment the discord between Prussia and Austria, and that Persigny appeared at Berlin for that purpose. His suggestions, however, did not meet then with a reception favourable to the French designs.

A letter of Stockmar's of February 13, contains a contribution to the history of that mission.

'The Grand Duchess Stephanie of Baden[1] said to one of my friends in January:

'"The abdication of the Hohenzollerns and the annexation of their States to Prussia[2] is my doing. I

[1] Daughter of the Viscount de Beauharnais, brother-in-law of the Empress Josephine, therefore cousin of Queen Hortense, the mother of Louis Napoleon: married in 1806 to the Grand Duke Charles of Baden.

[2] The Princes of Hohenzollern-Hechingen and Sigmaringen had ceded their States to Prussia on December 7, 1849.

said to my relatives:[1] 'The smaller German States, as, for instance, Baden, are rotten; do what you will, you can't maintain yourselves. Prussia alone is capable of existence, and they who wish to make their bed as well as they can, must hold to Prussia. If France intends to keep the peace and be friends with Germany, it can only do so on the basis of an alliance with Prussia, for nothing else can afford any firm hold; and this I wrote in due time to my cousin, the President. I suggested the mission of Persigny, to find out what Prussia on its part would do for the President. You know, that in order to make such an alliance acceptable to France, the President must have it in his power to offer it some gift, however small. Could not Landau, for instance, at least be ceded to him?'[2]

'"My friend answered:

'"'It will not be unknown to Your Highness that Persigny has failed in his mission to Berlin. I cannot, too, desist from saying that your plan is founded on a line of policy, the time for which has long passed away. I need not mention that the character

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[1] Stephanie's daughter Josephine was married to the then reigning Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen.

[2] Compare with this the communications in Bunsen's 'Leben (German edition), vol. iii. pp. 116–119.

of the King of Prussia would render the renewal of such a policy impossible; but I may remind you that if Prussia could consent to cede a single German village to France, it would be held in abhorrence by all Germany.'"'

At length, in February 1850, the Parliament was summoned for March, to Erfurt, to come to an agreement with the Governments who had acceded to the alliance of the three Kings, on the constitution of the narrower Confederation.

What were the prospects of this new undertaking? Let us hear its leader, Radowitz.

He says in his collected writings:[1] 'The preparatory labours were finished by the middle of June 1849; before the end of June, the Palatinate and Baden were subdued, the remnant of the National Assembly in Stuttgard dissolved, the Gotha Assembly, as representative of a very influential party for this object, had expressed its sentiments. Let us suppose now, that the Prussian Government had at that time resolved . . . . to appoint July 15 as the last day for delivering the declarations of the German Governments . . . . to summon the Parliament for August 1, then to carry through the immediate

[1] Vol. ii. pp. 123, &c., 181, &c.

acceptance of the Constitution . . . . to proclaim the Constitution, and let it work at once. . . . .' He thinks that the smaller States would certainly have given in their declarations of acceptance. Hanover and Saxony would not then, so soon after concluding the treaty of May, and after the Dresden revolution in May, have declined to send members to the Parliament. The subjugation of Hungary and Italy was only achieved later, in the course of August and September. It is, therefore, doubtful whether Austria at that time would have opposed the Prussian proceedings by force. Taking all points into consideration, we must arrive at the conclusion that the way pointed out would, in all probability, and notwithstanding all difficulties, have led to the desired end. And in the Cabinet there was no doubt that 'Prussia possessed the material means which must lead to certain victory.'

The immediate question, why this road to certain victory was not entered upon, is answered by Radowitz thus, that the Crown would not enter upon it, because 'it thought itself bound, by a higher duty, not to call the revolution in as an ally, in its efforts for the unity of the nation.' The Prussian Government, therefore, saw itself, he says, forced, not to take the shortest and safest way to its own aims.

Radowitz then discusses at some length the truth of the saying: 'He who wills the end must also will the means.' We must acknowledge that all means are not justifiable for the attainment of an object, and we may make full allowance for the conscientious scruples of the King. But what follows then? Does not the converse of the proposition remain true, that he who does not will, or does not possess the means, must, if sensible, give up the attainment of the object? Or, was the Prussian Government, because it could not, or might not, pursue 'the short and safe road,' obliged to turn into a roundabout, unsafe road, one, in fact, without any prospect of success? But this is what it did. It let the right opportunity go by. It waited till Austria had re-established its authority in Hungary and Italy, till Bavaria and Würtemberg had declared their dissent, till Hanover and Saxony had withdrawn, till there had been signs of the defection of some of the smaller States, and it summoned the Parliament for March 20, 1850, instead of August 1, 1849. The difficulties and dangers of the undertaking were therefore greatly increased. The eventual probability of a war with Austria had come nearer. It is true, that the plans of Radowitz showed apparent deference to the King's conscientious scruples. No pressure on the Govern-

ments! No coalition with the Revolutionary Powers! No increase of danger to Austria! But must not the King, with his delicate instinct, have soon perceived that this was partly only for appearance sake, that the whole undertaking was really opposed to his inmost desires, tendencies, and convictions?

How many Governments of their own free will desired the Union? Must not the success of the undertaking, in its last results, be of service to liberal views, that is to say in the King's eyes, to democracy, to revolution? And was the supplanting of Austria in its leadership of Germany, and eventually a war with that country, compatible with the duty and deference he had inherited from his father? In fact, was not the whole undertaking a revolution in disguise? It was certainly not a strongly conservative line of action. Under such circumstances could it be hoped that the King would decide on a resolute policy of union and keep to it? Was it not easy to foresee Olmütz?

The leaders of the Prusso-German policy at Berlin ought to have given up their policy of union, and resigned themselves, as soon as it was seen that the May alliance could not be carried out at once and decidedly, in the summer of 1849. No man of sense undertakes difficult and not absolutely required ex-

periments, if he feels conscious that the principal element in the calculation of his resources (in this case the King) is not quite to be depended on.

It is true, that the internal weakness of the Prussian policy of union, was not so evident to a spectator in the beginning of the year 1850, as it is to our retrospective view to-day. Besides, men hope what they wish for, and thus it happened that the convocation of the Erfurt Parliament excited many hopes, among those who believed in a union of Germany under Prussian guidance. At all events they felt it their duty to do what they could, in order to help towards the success of the work, which the Governments had begun. The population of Coburg was very zealous in electing a deputy; there appeared eighty-two out of eighty-four electors, and Stockmar, their fellow-citizen, received seventy-four votes.

On April 1, he arrived at Erfurt from England. After what he had seen and heard of the leading persons, he could not feel very sanguine. Radowitz, the principal leader in the union policy, was not known to him personally. It is true that Bunsen had told him for years, 'Radowitz is a noble and honest man, whom you may trust;' but the part hitherto acted by him, produced on Stockmar the very opposite effect. He warned people against him, as a

man who in all his political undertakings had an unlucky hand. The reports also which he had heard of Radowitz's demeanour in society, his display of many-sided information, his foible of imposing on one man by information which he had just gathered from another, made Stockmar, accustomed as he was to judge *ex ungue leonem*, shy of him; he who cared for appearances only, was not a man for him, and he considered such arts beneath a real statesman. How Radowitz suffered occasional shipwreck in his attempts to give himself learned airs in society, by means of easily picked up information, was illustrated by Stockmar, with a certain delight, by means of an anecdote, not generally known, of an occurrence which happened during the Frankfort days. A friend of Stockmar's, Herr von S., who lived near Frankfort, was going to an evening party at his aunt's, Frau von G., where he hoped to see Radowitz. On entering the carriage he observed, at a not very great distance, a bright reflection of fire. He told the coachman to drive towards it, and found a barn burning, and to a great extent burnt down. Having ascertained this fact, he drove to his aunt's. He found her alone in the saloon, and she explained to him, how Herr von Radowitz had taken all her friends up to the loft, in order to show and explain the beautiful Aurora

Borealis. At the same moment the whole party was heard coming down the stairs, led by Radowitz, who was dilating on terrestrial magnetism, electricity, and so on. On entering, Radowitz at once went up to Herr von S. with the question, 'Have you seen the beautiful Aurora Borealis?' *Herr von S.* 'Certainly, I was there myself; it will soon be over.' *Radowitz.* 'What do you mean?' *S.* 'I have just come from it; it is a burning barn.' Radowitz was silent, and after ten minutes he took his hat, and quietly disappeared.

Stockmar considered this anecdote as very characteristic of Radowitz, whom he did not think capable of rightly observing and appreciating realities, but on the contrary, according to his opinion, likely in politics also to mistake a barn on fire for an Aurora Borealis. As Stockmar met Radowitz in Erfurt with such feelings, it was but natural that an attempt made by a mutual friend to bring them more together, should be unsuccessful. Even the very first letter which we have before us of Stockmar's (April 6), shows the want of hope, and the mistrust which reigned in the German party there.

'The general impression is that nothing will be done, that we must soon separate. It is believed that all the Confederate Governments, Prussia not excepted, are trying to get out of the May alliance.

A secret understanding between Prussia and Austria is talked of, with a view to an acceptance of the Munich proposals.'[1]

Radowitz[2] complains bitterly of the 'deep mistrust of the Governments, not merely of those who are avowedly ill-disposed, but also of the Prussian.' But who could believe in any earnest and energetic determination on the part of the Prussian Government, to carry through what they had undertaken, when it was seen how the Prussian statesmen, instead of adopting the safe and right means to obtain the end in view, chose an impracticable road, thus making difficulties for themselves, and binding themselves hand and foot? Radowitz protests[3] 'before the face of Him who seeth in secret,' that the Prussian Government desired the object, viz., the union of the German nation into a Confederate State in its entirety and honestly; we cannot doubt it, therefore, as far as he was himself concerned. Consideration for the King placed all kinds of difficulties in his path—that was the secret, we are sure of it. But ought he to have become the leader in a line of policy, which the King had adopted but half reluctantly?

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[1] The plan brought forward by Bavaria, Würtemberg, and Saxony, for a German Confederate Constitution, February 27, 1850.

[2] Loc. cit. p. 254.

[3] Ibid. p. 122.

Even on the first question of importance, the position to be assumed by the Parliament with regard to the Draft Constitution laid before it, absurd difficulties arose from the hollowness of the policy of Union. As there had been so many delays in carrying out the Alliance of the Three Kings, there had arisen, to use the words of Radowitz,[1] 'from the fast-spreading stream of political history, many things which reacted on the Draft Constitution of March 28, 1849. The most important was the Prussian National Constitution, which meanwhile had been finally settled; it was impossible to submit this to further alterations, which could only have been for the worse, in the points in which it differed from the Confederate Constitution; this was especially the case with the section concerning the fundamental rights, where the danger of general theories is always greatest.'

Therefore the Parliament was given to understand by Radowitz, that the adoption of the Constitution *en bloc* might possibly seriously endanger the formation of the Confederate State; he advised strongly against it;[2] modifications were wished for, though he was unable to particularise them; it was for the Assembly

[1] Loc. cit. p. 253.

[2] 'Threatening advice,' Camphausen, the reporter of the Lower House, called it.

to propose them. A proceeding such as was never seen before, or will be again, entirely calculated to awake the suspicion, that he wished to make a fool of the Parliament.

The latter found itself in a difficult position: if it simply adopted the Constitution, it was forewarned that the whole work would be wrecked; if it let the Constitution go, to make fresh proposals, it would abandon a formal and settled legitimate claim, for an entirely uncertain result; for whether the proposed alterations would be accepted by the Governments, and would thus secure the realisation of the Union, no one could tell beforehand with certainty. The majority decided therefore, on the somewhat artificial expedient of 'acceptance of the Constitution *en bloc*, at the same time, and an eventual offer to the united Princes, of certain alterations.' They now imagined the Governments were caught; with one hand they held fast the unaltered Constitution, and with the other they offered to the Governments proposals for modifications of the same, on the acceptance of which the original draft would be abandoned. But what Herr von Manteuffel had said beforehand, came true, 'The large fish broke through the net.'

Stockmar did not agree with the majority. He said that if a man had two ditches in front of him, it was

not wise to jump over both at once, before knowing whether it were necessary. He thought it would be a mistaken policy, if the Parliament did more than accept the Constitution. And owing to his acquaintance with England, he set great value on the observance of such rules of method. The Assembly ought not to push compliance so far as to submit to such extraordinary demands from the Governments. To dissuade them from accepting their own propositions, without making any others, was simply playing with the Parliament. They must wait and see what the Governments would do, when the Constitution was accepted *en bloc*. If the threats that the work would be shipwrecked through the acceptance of their own proposals, proved true, this was so unheard of a proceeding,[1] that they might quietly throw the responsibility on the Governments, who would thus only make it evident that they were not in earnest in the whole matter. Were they, however, in earnest, some expedient would soon be found, according to the English proverb, 'where there is a will there is a way.'

These views Stockmar, on April 10, placed before

[1] The quiet and measured Camphausen could not repress the observation in the Lower House on April 13, that he had failed to see any reason for the threatening advice of Radowitz. The relation of the Administrative Council to the Assembly was not such as to justify a proceeding of that sort.

several of the members best known to him from Frankfort: H. Gagern, President Simson, and others. Gagern answered him, that it was known beforehand, that the Governments wished for alterations, that it would therefore be necessary to leap the second ditch. Prussia could not expose itself to any change in its Constitution, won, as it had been, with such difficulty;[1] therefore it was necessary to offer a change in the Confederate Constitution on the divergent points. This proposal could be made without cancelling the preceding acceptance of the Constitution.

Simson answered Stockmar that the simple acceptance of the Government proposals was impossible, because the realisation of a Confederate State rested with Prussia; and there, as things now stood, depended on the will of the King. Without his sincere co-operation, the affair could not be carried out; and this co-operation could only be obtained, if the King were spared the necessity of again changing the newly settled Prussian Constitution. The changes under discussion were certainly of no great consequence. But

[1] Article 18, however, of this Constitution, expressly foresaw such alterations, and left the arrangement of them, on the ground of the Confederate Constitution, to the King; only reserving to the Diet, the right of examining whether the changes arranged by the King, were in accordance with the Confederate Constitution.

in Berlin they were looked upon as very important, and as it was impossible to alter this opinion, they must not try to run counter to it. Camphausen, who just then came in, on hearing Stockmar's views, exclaimed warmly, 'Ah! that would delight me; I have said so from the first, but I stood quite alone, forsaken by all my friends; and convinced that my original views would not gain supporters, I have modified the motion I brought forward, according to the opinion of the majority.'

Stockmar's work in Erfurt was restricted to such conferences with the most distinguished men of the so-called Gotha party, and the fulfilment of the immediate duties of a deputy. His whole nature, and his antecedents unsuited him for the life of a parliamentary party man. His own independent political convictions were too strong, and he had too little patience, to submit to party discipline, and to stand meetings of sections. He had not shared in the work of the earlier German parliaments, and on this account was not suited for a party leader. And on the other hand, his whole life had been spent too near the circles, where decisive resolutions are made, to find much pleasure in taking part in the wearisome parliamentary preliminary and postliminary discussions. Stockmar never made a single speech whilst in Erfurt:

talking for talking's sake, without prospect of any practical result, was not his nature. He could not expect to carry through his views in the house on the question, which, according to him, was the most important, the arrangement of the Constitution, and all the other matters under discussion were of secondary interest to him.

Besides, Stockmar was not accustomed to speaking in public, and was not by nature well fitted for it. In conversation his language was lively, striking, incisive. He went direct to his point, avoiding all oratorical curves,. He liked to pass over the intermediate points in his arguments, nay, he frequently lost the thread of his sentences. Before the discussions on the Constitution began, there were reports in Erfurt, carefully spread and exaggerated by the Conservative party, of the hostile attitude assumed by the Foreign Powers, to the Prussian attempt at unity.

'I am told,' writes Stockmar to London on April 6, 'that Prussia is much intimidated by the consciousness of its entire isolation in Europe, and that this feeling has been increased by the answer it has received to a question, addressed to the English Cabinet. The question related to the threats of Russia against Prussia, and the answer was said to be rather in favour

of Russia. I shall not believe this, till you confirm it.' The answer received by Stockmar, was to the effect that the report was unfounded. The only expression of opinion from England on the German Question, was contained in a despatch to Berlin of July 1849, in which the Prussian plans were throughout approved of by England. Lord Palmerston was known to have no affection for Russia, or Russo-Austrian anti-constitutionalism. It had certainly long been evident to the English Ministry, that Prussia, having to struggle against the open enmity of Russia and Austria, the hidden enmity of France, and the jealousy of the larger German States, had but small prospect of success, unless it was supported by the enthusiasm of the people. On the part of the English Ministry there was certainly no enmity against Prussia on the German Question, only want of faith; and this would be overcome, when there were facts to speak for themselves. But in the Schleswig-Holstein matter the English Ministry and the English public were entirely opposed to Prussia. In this affair Germany was at present clearly the weaker side; and therefore people in England were inclined to espouse the stronger side, in order to bring about a peace.

If we compare this statement with what Radowitz[1] says of the attitude assumed by England, with regard to the German Question, we shall find in his account partly a complement of ours, and partly, in our statement, a rectification of the judgment passed by Radowitz.

Radowitz is right in saying that the mass of the English public were not friendly to German affairs, from the dim idea that German Unity might be injurious to English commerce; from disinclination for the romantic, fantastic, unpractical appearance which the German movement might well have for foreigners, who found it difficult to understand it; with the Tories, from traditional sympathy for Vienna and Petersburg, where they were mistaken enough to imagine that they saw their own political opinions. We may add that that undefined disinclination for what is new, for upstarts, was also brought into play. But Radowitz is wrong in saying that the English Government 'in the great crisis, protested against Prussia's German vocation.' The English Government expressed itself as favourable in theory, but remained neutral in practice. Radowitz reproaches it with this. 'It ought to have decidedly placed itself on the Prussian side.' But how could anyone

[1] Loc. cit. p. 220.

expect that England would place itself decidedly on the side of Prussia, when Prussia itself was not decided in its German policy? Radowitz indeed says,[1] 'The English statesmen blamed many things in the conduct of Prussia as irresolute and unreliable; but they ought to have seen that this was caused by the total isolation of Prussia, and they should have sought for the remedy, where it was really to be found.' It comes in fact to this, that Prussia said, 'If you only stood by me, I should have courage;' and England answered, 'If you only had courage, I would stand by you.' Who should take the first step? The poet says,

> And if you only trust yourself,
> You will be trusted too by others.

With the gloomy prospect of a complication with the Foreign Powers, the Erfurt Parliament drew towards its end. On April 27, two days before it was actually closed, Stockmar writes: 'The two houses of Parliament will have finished their labours in three or four days. The question, "shall we only be adjourned, for a certain or uncertain time, or dissolved"? occupies at present the thoughts of the deputies. On parliamentary grounds, and in the interests of the Govern-

[1] Loc. cit. p. 222.

ments themselves, I consider that an adjournment for a fixed period, which can be afterwards extended according to circumstances, would be the more judicious course. But to judge from what I have here seen of the conduct of the Prussian Ministers, I have no hope of their adopting the most judicious course. I have only heard from these Ministers, short, meaningless, awkward or obscure oracular speeches, delivered like the exhortations of a schoolmaster to his boys. What I heard in this way, could not inspire me with confidence in their aptitude for governing, nor their parliamentary knowledge, nor their general ability, and least of all with confidence in their firmness, strength of character, and German feeling. That such Ministers should have obtained from Parliament, with regard to the proposals coming from themselves alone, all that they have really obtained, till the present moment, is not to be attributed to their ability, but only to the favourable disposition, the moderation of the houses, and to a yielding temper which arises from the general fatigue which prevails in Germany, and from the political short-sightedness of the majorities in the two houses.'

On April 29, the Parliament was closed, not adjourned. On May 1, Stockmar started for Coburg,

by way of Gotha. From the latter place he writes on May 2:

'Yesterday everyone was full of the Congress of Princes, which was to be held here on the 15th instant. The idea arose with the Duke of Coburg, who had invited the King of Prussia, and had at once received his friendly and ready acceptance. The object of the thing was to obtain the speedy agreement of the Princes to the revised proposals of Erfurt. For this end a declaration was to be formally drawn up in a preliminary meeting by the Ministers in attendance, of which they could with probability assume, that it would, without further discussion, obtain the consent of the various reigning Princes. In this way they hoped to bring about a *fait accompli*, which might serve as a basis for the negotiations with Austria on the wider confederation.

'So the affair stood till yesterday evening. To-day I heard that the Congress of Princes at Gotha had come to nought. Minister von Seebach, just come back from Berlin, had brought an autograph letter from the King of Prussia. In it the King expressed his extreme regret, that in consequence of a threatening note from Austria, it was impossible for him to come to Gotha. He therefore invited the various Princes to come to Berlin on the 8th instant, in order

to be able, by a conference with them, to answer the contents of that note, according to the opinions and final determination of his allies. He concluded with expressing his hopes that the real negotiations on the Union itself, might still take place in Gotha "at a later time."

'I cannot understand the policy of Austria with regard to Germany and Prussia. The arguments which Austria may bring forward against us, on account of the violation of treaty-rights, can be met on our side by quite as many and even stronger ones. If Austria intends to carry out its own interpretation of those treaty-rights by force of arms, and if it finds on the part of other Cabinets, either assistance or passive toleration, then Europe seems to me, to enter into the same political state, in which it was at the time of the division of Poland. For we have, on the one side, the application of brute force, for the carrying out of egotistical Russo-Austrian pretensions, on the other, the same political narrowness and short-sightedness, the same timidity and impotence, which allows the most crying injustice, and the most dangerous political nonsense, simply because internal disunion, and traditional servility, also political stupidity and villany, have for the moment gained the upper hand. What does Austria want? does it

want to force a nation of so many millions of Germans, to render her that moral subserviency, which she considers an indispensable element for the government of the Austrian State? If Austria succeeds in this, the necessary consequence will be, that the Germans will have to give up that development which their own character requires, and consider themselves as political serfs of Austria. Should Austria really proceed in this direction, Russia has probably a greater share in this policy than Austria. However this may be, I do not yet believe that Russia means to carry out such a policy with the sword; and for the present, as before, I remain of opinion, that, trusting in the disunion, the weakness, and servility of Germany, it hopes to gain the victory on the field of diplomacy, by a mere threat of war.

'Among other things which I heard, the most important was, that the Bavarian Minister, Von der Pfordten, continues to inform the Prussian Cabinet, that Bavaria possesses no other means of self-preservation than aggrandisement. He therefore proposes to divide Baden; so that Austria should have the Baden lake district; Würtemberg the middle portion, the so-called Carlsruhe circle; Bavaria the rest, thus gaining continuity with the Palatinate. I can imagine that this Bavarian project might be tempting to a

short-sighted, ultra-Prussian statesman, particularly as he might hope that Prussia would then pay itself by some of the smaller adjoining principalities.'

'Now for a little about Schleswig-Holstein, which must either submit to the violence of France, England, and Russia, or throw its own military forces into the scale. Though my very heart bleeds, yet I can give Prussia no other advice, than to abstain from any further armed interference in this business. In the temper in which the three Powers mentioned above are at present, they will hardly carry out their intended brutal dictatorship in Schleswig-Holstein, without wronging, if only indirectly, the dearest rights and interests of Prussia, as an independent State. But since according to the great iron laws on which everything here below depends, even the most infamous policy has its limits, I would advise the Berlin Cabinet most earnestly, to send to London, without loss of time, an able, determined man, to explain to Palmerston in few, but most explicit words, "That Prussia could not shrink from a general war, in case the honour and life of the Prussian State were affected by the death-warrant to be passed on Schleswig-Holstein, by the three already mentioned Powers." Should the Prussian Ministers have enough courage and decision to send such a message to

England, I am sure, beforehand, that the messenger would meet with such a reception, at least from the Queen and the Prince, as might be expected from all right-minded persons for the representative of a State, which, though insolently threatened, and hard-pressed on all sides, does not allow itself to be prevented from asserting its own honour and rights.'

But in Berlin they were far from such manly decision. On May 14 Stockmar writes:

'It is unbelievable, and yet I cannot doubt it, that in Berlin, in order to avoid a war, they will appeal to the great Powers, to an European Congress, and thus submit this German question to the decision of foreign countries.[1] They have really taken steps in this sense.' Stockmar, on the contrary, was firmly convinced that Prussia need not shrink from a war.

On May 14 he writes:

'The demands which Austria makes upon Prussia, the threats which it allows itself to employ, are suggested by Russia. Austria tries, by carrying out the wishes of Russia in German affairs, to discharge

[1] Radowitz himself (loc. cit. p. 249) confirms this. 'For those who considered such a price (war) too high a one to pay for the honour of Prussia and the salvation of Germany, there always remained, as the infallible means for averting a war, the appeal to an European Congress.'

the obligations under which it laid itself, to that Power, for the help afforded it in Hungary. But the Austrian threats are empty ones. Austria is certainly not in a position to carry on a war with Prussia, on its own resources; it must depend entirely on the help of Russia. Russia promises help, because it feels convinced that threats are sufficient, but it is far from certain that it would really help, if need arose.

'Lastly, Prussia need not fear, in case of necessity, to accept a war, for which her antagonist has neither a good cause, nor a reasonable object. Prussia cannot yield without allowing the most dangerous state of things to be brought about for Germany and for the health of Europe. For Russia, whilst hindering the re-organisation of Germany, is on the point of placing itself in the same preponderating position, in which it was when, a hundred years ago, it destroyed Poland, and the interference of Russia in German affairs, is the beginning of an attempt to inflict the fate of Poland on Germany.'

The reader will remember what came of the Berlin Conference of Princes; how it led to the appointment of a Provisional Confederate Government, how the Confederation then gradually dissolved, till on November 15, Prussia expressly declared, that it would give up the

Confederate Constitution, on November 29, in Olmütz, submitted to every demand of Austria, with regard to the German question, Electoral Hesse, and Schleswig-Holstein. In the meantime, Stockmar had leisure at Coburg, to digest the experiences of the last few years as to German politics. On June 29 he writes:

'The order of things which in 1848 fell into ruins in Germany, cannot be built up again by mere diplomacy, as in 1814 and 1815. I consider the continuance or rehabilitation of the sovereignty of the single States of 1814 as impossible. It existed really only in domestic affairs, but in foreign relations was a sham, and always had and required a protector (either France or Austria). The same applies to a dualism of Prussia and Austria.

'It would first of all require the destruction of the constitutional system. A despotic supremacy over the rest of Germany must be the leading maxim of the dualistic alliance. I look upon a mere loose international alliance of large and small States, which at the same time wish to maintain their perfect independence, as mere nonsense.'

'What means do we possess in Germany for preserving the balance between various interests and demands, for the formation of a national union? I

am told, peaceful negotiations.[1] And who is to conduct these negotiations? Some thirty German, and all the European diplomatists. But our diplomacy as it is, is thoroughly false and dishonest, and can only lie and deceive; and lies and deceit cannot create anything really useful and desirable. So at last there is nothing left but war, which will have been most promoted by those who maintain that they only desire peace, viz., by our Princes and their Ministers, in their short-sightedness and malevolence.'

During Stockmar's stay at Coburg, several deaths took place, which, though in different ways, affected him deeply. On July 2, Sir Robert Peel died, then Louis Philippe, August 26, 1850, and soon after, his daughter, Louise, the Queen of the Belgians, October 11, 1850.

We have already mentioned how Stockmar had become acquainted, and then, to a certain degree, intimate with, Sir Robert Peel. The formal, suspicious, and reserved English statesman could not resist the straightforward, forcible, fresh honesty and disinterestedness, and, when the ice was once broken, the sparkling humour, of the Coburger. Peel thawed under the influence of their intercourse. They inter-

[1] This refers to the idea, then still floating about, of settling the German affairs by an European Congress.

changed their views on present affairs, their recollections of the past. But sometimes Peel thought Stockmar's manner too free. 'One day,' the latter himself relates, 'I had brought him to talk of an important political event, in which he had himself been concerned. He was just about to make some interesting disclosures; only the last word of the secret was wanting, when he paused. To help him, I exclaimed, "Well, don't gulp it down." This disconcerted him; he made an odd face, and broke off.'

Peel's death moved Stockmar so deeply, that he published an article on Peel, with his name, in the 'Deutsche Zeitung' of July 16, 1850; a thing most unusual for him. We think the reader will be thankful to us for giving it here.

Stockmar on Peel.

'As one of the many privileges which have fallen to my lot in life, I place the acquaintance made with Sir Robert Peel, during the summer of 1819, which in the course of time developed into an unbroken, sincere, and friendly relation. It is not yet time to attempt to draw his portrait as a statesman; party-spirit would refuse to recognise the most successful likeness. But I consider it will be useful, and also a mark of the high esteem in which I held him when

living, and with which I shall always think of him, now that he is gone, if the outlines of his character are indicated and vouched for by one of those who knew him long and intimately, and was able to watch him in moments when nature is stronger than habit and purpose.

'If by the word genius, we understand the highest innate, and therefore independent creative power of the mind, that word, if applied to Peel, will not correctly indicate the whole of the forces, out of which nature had framed the man. His most peculiar and most important faculty seemed to me to consist rather in a quick and sure understanding of all the relations of men generally, but especially of their business relations. As understood by him, all single impressions found, as by themselves, their right place; and acquired in the shortest time so true a coherence, that the whole and its parts could be surveyed with the greatest clearness.

'This talent had been aided from his youth up by an indefatigable desire for learning, unflagging diligence, great power of work, and a happy memory. That which Peel, at his time, could acquire at the English schools and university, he had eagerly striven after, and thoroughly mastered. In the future progress of his development, his lively desire for knowledge and

culture, and his love for works of art, led him beyond the narrow groove in which his countrymen generally remain in such matters.

'That he was more or less acquainted with the whole of English literature, need not be said. He was also well read in modern foreign literature, particularly that of France. But political activity, not learning, was his object; and conscious of his practical skill, he naturally desired chiefly that kind of knowledge which, in his position, he could employ most usefully and appropriately.

'As soon as he entered the public service, he devoted himself, with untiring perseverance, to the study of political economy, finances, and civil administration. It may be, that the love and the zeal with which he studied that branch of political knowledge, to the day of his death, were greatly aided by the facility and sureness with which he unravelled the most complicated questions, and placed them in the clearest light. He reached a high perfection in this sphere of knowledge, and for a time England has certainly lost in him the master in these important subjects.

'Of all who sat with him in the present House of Commons, no one, I think, knew so well its history, its structure, and the manifestation and meaning of its peculiar life. His authority there was therefore

never contested, for even his opponents shared the conviction that it belonged to him by right. If, as no Englishman will deny, the most influential man in the House of Commons is the first man in the State, after the Sovereign, Peel has been that first man during the last fifteen years, whether he was Minister, or whether he sat on the Opposition benches.

'Peel's mind and character rested on moral foundations, which I have not seen once shaken, either in his private or his public life. From these foundations rose that never-failing spring of fairness, honesty, kindness, moderation, and regard for others, which Peel showed to all men, and under all circumstances. On these foundations grew that love of country which pervaded his whole being, which knew of but one object—the true welfare of England: of but one glory and one reward, for each citizen, viz., to have contributed something towards that welfare. Such love of country admits of but one ambition, and hence the ambition of that man was as pure as his heart. To make every sacrifice for that ambition, which the fates of his country demand from everyone, he considered his most sacred duty, and he has made these sacrifices, however difficult they might have been to him. Wherein lay the real difficulty of those sacrifices,

will perhaps hereafter be explained by those who knew the secret of the political circumstances and the personal character of the men with whom he was brought in contact; and who would not think of weighing imponderable sacrifices on the balance of vulgar gain. If he has met with antagonists who have questioned his motives, it was from ignorance, or from malicious intent.

'The man whose feelings for his own country rested on so firm a foundation, could not be dishonest or unfair towards foreign countries. The same right understanding, fairness, and moderation, which he evinced in his treatment of internal affairs, guided Peel in his treatment of all foreign questions. The wish frequently expressed by him, to see the welfare of all nations improved, was thoroughly sincere. He knew France and Italy from his own observation, and he had studied the political history of the former with great industry. For Germany he had a good will, nay, a predilection, particularly for Prussia.

'In his private life, Peel was a real pattern. He was the most loving, faithful, conscientious husband, father, and brother, unchanging and indulgent to his friends, and always ready to help his fellow-citizens according to his power.

'Of the vulnerable parts of his character, his

enemies may have many things to tell. What had been observed by all who came into closer contact with him, could not escape my own observation. I mean his too great prudence, caution, and at times, extreme reserve, in important as well as in unimportant matters, which he showed, not only towards more distant, but even towards his nearer acquaintances. If he was but too often sparing of words, and timidly cautious in oral transactions, he was naturally still more so in his written communications. The fear never left him, that he might have to hear an opinion once expressed, or a judgment once uttered by him, repeated by the wrong man, and in the wrong place, and misapplied. His friends were sometimes in despair over this peculiarity. To his opponents it supplied an apparent ground for suspicion and incrimination. It seemed but too likely, that there was a doubtful motive for such reserve, or that itwas intended to cover narrowness and weakness of thought and feeling, or want of enterprise and courage. To me also this peculiarity seemed often injurious to himself, and to the matter in hand; and I could not help being sometimes put out by it, and wishing from the bottom of my heart, that he could have got rid of it. But when one came to weigh the acts of the man against his manner, the disagreeable impression soon gave way. I quickly

convinced myself, that this, to me, so objectionable trait was but an innate peculiarity; and that in a sphere of activity, where thoughtless unreserve and *laisser aller* showed themselves in every possible form, Peel was not likely to find any incentive, or to form a resolution to overcome, in this point, his natural disposition.

'I have been told, or I have read it somewhere, that Peel was the most successful type of political mediocrity. In accepting this estimate of my departed friend as perfectly true, I ask Heaven to relieve all Ministers, within and without Europe, of their superiority, and to endow them with Peel's mediocrity: and I ask this, for the welfare of all nations, and in the firm conviction that ninety-nine hundredths of the higher political affairs can be properly and successfully conducted by such Ministers only as possess Peel's mediocrity: though I am willing to admit, that the remaining hundredth may, through the power and boldness of a true genius, be brought to a particularly happy, or, it may be, to a particularly unhappy issue.

'In order to give a small proof of what Peel's mediocrity was, with regard to political maxims, clearness of perception and anticipation, strength of conviction and decision, I add in conclusion a passage

from one of his letters. It was written in the days of March 1848.

'"Your questions are of too general a character; the relations of the States of the Continent, particularly Germany, are too complicated, to enable an English statesman to answer them categorically. I take it for granted that by the *casus fœderis* between England and Germany, you mean nothing but a warlike attack against both countries from without, not attempts at revolution that might be made within the dominions of the two allied nations, and against which every government must and can defend itself, if it really deserves the name of a government. That I have always been a warm adherent of an alliance with Germany, is known to you. In the meantime, I recommend the Continental Powers, as a first rule of conduct, to keep only on the defensive. For who could at present foresee what direction and what development the elements now at work on the Continent will take? However terrible the storm of the moment may appear to the younger ones among us, I am perfectly convinced that we shall tide it over, because I believe that the times are in our favour, that is, in favour of the cause of constitutional freedom, under the ægis of monarchy. Therefore it is now, for us here in England, to set the best example,

and to prove to Europe, that the monarchical constitution is the strongest bulwark of true possible liberty. Let us therefore be prepared, and firmly resolved, to resist every attack, let it come from where it may, most vigorously and boldly: but let us be equally resolute, not to wish to begin an attack ourselves. Let us suppress every desire for crusades against principles and elements, which, if seen in their true light, are only those of anarchy and madness. Let us free ourselves of all fear of the Propaganda and its power of infection, as it only weakens us, and makes us more liable to the disease. The intoxication cannot last; its inseparable companion, disorder, with its pains and penalties, will soon sober people again. If the causes from which this new revolution has sprung, should really develope forces of an anti-social and destructive character, they cannot, according to the higher laws of nature, have any permanence. With such enemies I should never come to terms, and in the firm conviction that the danger cannot be of long duration, I should never regard and treat their power as higher than it deserves. Anti-social dreams have never lasted long—in our time they must become still shorter, for, numerically, too many have a binding interest to uphold principles which alone render human society possible. A victory of communistic theories

over the institutions of property, I consider as altogether impossible: if, however, against my expectations, it should appear that one or the other nation wishes to be governed according to communistic principles, the only thing we can do is, not to envy it. Prussia can do much at this moment. It can uphold and invigorate the national spirit; it should have courage, and, above all, it should not fear the effect of free institutions, honestly carried out. The German people is loyal by nature."'[1]

The warm personal sympathy for the loss of the man, may, in one sense, have rendered this paper incomplete. In drawing the character of Peel, Stockmar does not show the source whence sprang the great changes in his political life—changes which gave to his opponents so easy a point of attack. It was the former leader of the Conservatives who carried the emancipation of the Roman Catholics, which he had once so strongly resisted; it was the former champion of the Protectionists who settled the repeal of the corn laws. Such contrasts indicate a deficiency either of character or of insight. After Peel's death, Stockmar used frequently in conversation to explain this by saying that Peel, as a politician, was sharp, but

[1] The original of Peel's letter is unfortunately missing.—*Translator.*

short-sighted ; a Myops, whose eye naturally grasped first the single things which were nearest, and arrived but slowly at the survey of things in their larger outline.

With deep sorrow, Stockmar received, a few months after Peel's death, the intelligence of the death of Louise, Queen of the Belgians. As early as July he had felt anxious about her state of health. On September 9, he writes :

'The last accounts have increased my fears. . . . From the moment that the Queen entered that circle, in which I for so many years have had a place, I have revered her, as a pattern of her sex. We say and believe that men can be noble and good ; of her we know with certainty that she was so. We saw in her daily a truthfulness, a faithful fulfilment of duty, which makes us believe in the possible, though but seldom evident, nobleness of the human heart.

'In characters such as the Queen's, I see a guarantee of the perfection of the Being who has created human nature.'

We ought to add that Stockmar had not merely the highest opinion of the character of the Queen Louise, but also of her insight and judgment ; and he often expressed his opinion, that if anything were to

happen to King Leopold, the Regency might be entrusted to the Queen with perfect confidence.

In the letter just mentioned, he devotes a few lines to the memory of Louis Philippe.

'Louis Philippe, too, has finished his course. His death did not take me by surprise; since November 1849, he had suffered from a debility, which the doctors could not mistake. I had calculated that he would not live beyond the close of the autumn. Had the King had more faith in the eternal power of morality, and less confidence in his own cleverness, and that of mankind in general, which is nothing but the poor work of the understanding, so easily led astray, the events of the last few years might have been historically very different.'

In the end of October, Stockmar again started for England. Actuated by his feeling of justice to plead in defence for Prussia, he wrote from thence the following on December 2, therefore just at the time when the Prusso-Austrian conflict had been decided at Olmütz, in a manner which he must have deeply lamented.

'On all sides a mischievous pleasure is expressed, that Prussia should have brought itself into a position, out of which it cannot escape, without encountering great dangers. That Prussia is really in such a dan-

gerous position, I fully believe—but I cannot allow that Prussia owes this position entirely to its own political faults. It is true that the King and all his Ministers have made the most incomprehensible mistakes since 1848; but of one thing I am certain, that at no time have either the King or his Ministers, as they have been reproached with doing, ever had the idea of allying themselves with the revolutionary and democratic elements, for their own advantage, and to the injury of Austria. On the contrary, the King had an invincible horror of those elements, and it is this which has more especially helped to bring him into the position in which he now finds himself. But far more, than by any fault of his own and his Ministers, he has been injured by Schwarzenberg's inimical, brutal, and threatening policy; and the most dangerous step, which Prussia has as yet taken, the mobilising of the army, is the immediate consequence of Schwarzenberg's perverse conduct.[1]

'One of my friends in Paris has told me, that the Emperor Nicholas has made the following declaration to the French Government, through Kisseleff.

'He would eventually, sword in hand, force Prussia to fulfil its part of the treaty, concluded with Den-

[1] Prussia had, in the beginning of November, before the Conference of Olmütz, mobilised its army.

mark on July 2. On the other hand, in the event of a war between Austria and Prussia, he would maintain a strict neutrality, unless any third Power interfered, to turn this purely German conflict into an European war. But as it seemed to him that Austria went too far against Prussia in the German affairs, he would at once send a warning to Schwarzenberg to be more conciliatory in his negotiations with Berlin.

'This communication proves two things: 1. That at the present moment everything depends on Russia. 2. That Schwarzenberg has gone too far against Prussia.

'Over and over again, I hear that the best means of settling the German difficulties would be an European Congress. But who shall represent the rights of Germany in such a Congress? One can see beforehand, that these would never be mentioned; and the welfare of Germany would again be sacrificed to the mere convenience of Europe, viz. to the interests of foreign Powers.'

Meantime the decision at Olmütz had been arrived at (November 29). The 'Kreuzzeitungs'[1] party triumphed over the humiliation, over the 'repentance and conversion.'

[1] This newspaper represented the views of the reactionary party.

It may be easily imagined in how disagreeable a position a German, a friend of Prussia, found himself at this time in England. On every side 'ambitious Prussia' was despised and scorned. The more the particulars of this retreat were known, the more these sentiments increased. 'How Palmerston must have rubbed his hands,' writes Stockmar, 'when he heard that in November Prussia demanded from the Duke of Brunswick that he should refuse a passage to Holstein for the troops of the Bund; but at the same time would give him no assurance of protection against the possible results of such a refusal.'

The close of the year 1850 must have filled all German patriots with grief.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE YEARS 1851–1852.

Stockmar on the preponderance of Russia in European politics, and the policy of the Emperor Nicholas—The entrance of Austria as a whole into the German Bund—The Ministerial crisis in England, February and March, 1851—Stockmar on the state of things in England—Stockmar on the English Court—His views on German affairs—The French *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851—Conversation with Louis Napoleon—First impression caused by the *coup d'état* in England—The probable danger of a Crusade against England—Uncertainty of the friendship of the absolute Powers for Louis Napoleon—His prospects—Rumours of an alliance between him and the Northern Powers, at the expense of Belgium, Sardinia, and Hanover—Danger of a secret war against Belgium and Sardinia—Thoughts of a possible restoration and fusion of the Bourbons—The resignation of Palmerston, end of December 1851—Anxieties as to a French attack on Belgium, beginning of 1852—Formation of the English Coalition Ministry, December 1852—Preparations for the marriage of the Duke of Brabant.

STOCKMAR passed the winter of 1851 as usual in England.

His interest in European politics during this time was chiefly turned to the part which Russia had for some years past begun to play; Stockmar having felt the hand of Russia in the German and Schleswig-Holstein questions.

'When I was young,' he writes, 'Napoleon ruled the Continent of Europe. Now it looks as if the Russian Emperor had taken Napoleon's place, and as if he, for a few years at least, would dictate laws to the Continent, though with other views and by other means.

'He thinks the despotic Government of his own country will be endangered, if Austria, Prussia, and Germany have limited monarchies. He, therefore, maintains that the so-called constitutions are founded on lies and corruption; he has a mission to fight against this erroneous, mischievous system, and he must not allow the present exceedingly fortunate political constellation to pass by, without making use of it.

'The Emperor is ready to enter the lists for the principle of arbitrary Government.

'He is, in 1851, certainly weaker than Napoleon was in 1810; and it cannot but be perceived that Russia is only dangerous to Europe, when supported by allies on both flanks. And Russia has, in fact, at this moment more than one powerful ally. I shall rapidly enumerate her confederates.

'1. The friends of civil order, who have been frightened by socialism, communism, and extreme democracy; therefore, the Conservatives in England also.

'2. Austria, at least as long as it remains in its present political phase.

'3. The King of Prussia and all his Ultras.

'4. The German Governments and dynasties, with very few exceptions.

'5. The circumstance, that in France, all the so-called friends of order consider that war would be the most ruinous thing that could befall them; whilst they openly confess that the French would succumb before united Europe, and the latter would, as a guarantee of peace in the future, separate large portions of territory from France.

'What, however, is peculiarly in favour of Russia, is the circumstance that it need not, in order to carry out its dictatorship abroad, ceaselessly consume, like Napoleon, great military forces, but that it can maintain its forces undiminished, and, resting on them, can effect more through mere diplomacy and threats, than through victories on the battle-field. This is a position of strength such as we have hardly witnessed before.

'It is to be seen how long Russia will play this part, and what results will in the end accrue to the country from it.

'With the Emperor personally, it will be as with every man who is governed by a fixed idea. He is

not likely to impose a limit to himself, beyond which, from motives of political prudence, he would not go. He is more likely to be inclined to advance as far as his opponents give way. He is embarking in a conflict with powers over which, according to natural laws, no lasting victory is possible. His policy appears to me purely fanatical, and I should not like to promise it durable results.'

These last thoughts are repeated more at length in another letter.

'The life of States consists in two factors, which are in constant change and antagonism with regard to each other: the factor of order and stability, and that of motion towards advancement and necessary transformation. I cannot, therefore, expect anything from a system which only recognises one factor, and holds the other as unnatural and hurtful, to be annihilated as a matter of political principle. This system appears to me to rest on blind error, which, in opposition to the laws of nature, strives for an impossibility. It provokes exactly that which it is determined to combat and destroy. It will, therefore, never gain the victory; for Russia cannot overcome the factor of progress; it can only drive it to despair, and, therefore, force it to try unreasonable, instead of reasonable measures.

'I consider that the system is a product of the autocratic instinct, which is so one-sided as not to perceive the complete nothingness and perniciousness of that system. The Emperor feels and thinks much as follows:

'"Unless in my foreign policy I constitute myself the rigid representative of conservatism, I shall not be able, for any length of time, to uphold autocracy even in Russia itself. In order to do this, I must ally myself with the conservative elements, in all those countries over which I wish to exercise any influence. But they will only ally themselves with me, if the effects of democracy, socialism, communism, &c., become more unendurable to them, than the effects of a Russian system of Government. The exuberant growth, therefore, of anarchical elements in other countries, helps on my influence in those lands."

'Nicholas, as I know him, is Russian through and through. If we acknowledge that, as such, he is in the right, yet, with regard to Europe, he will prove probably in the wrong.

'He can, however, meantime, by his system, keep up the process of political fermentation in all those countries, which far surpass Russia in political civilisation, and thus long prevent them from attaining a solid national reorganisation.

'I believe I hate revolution and its offspring as much as does Nicholas, but I should endeavour to stem the evil through other means. I feel certain that only through rational and lawful institutions, which are in harmony with the nature of the people, and faithfully to be kept by all, because they are meant for all, can real head be made against the subversive spirit; for such institutions unite and strengthen the truly conservative elements in a nation, making them the support of prudent and honest governments. But all attempts to rule nations by the might and power of an individual alone, and through merely mechanical institutions, will prove vain.'

At that period, February 1851, Stockmar feared that the still undecided question of the entrance of Austria into the German Confederation, would, under Russian influence, be settled in the affirmative, to the injury of Germany. It is true that the decision arrived at in the course of the next five months, was in the contrary sense; but this again was due to the preponderating influence of Russia. We find in Stockmar's papers various notices on the course of this affair, containing some facts not commonly known, and which we therefore subjoin.

'Austria first negotiated with Russia as to the

entrance of all its provinces into the German Confederation.'

'At first the Emperor Nicholas declared himself strongly against the project. Prince Schwarzenberg therefore met with but a cool reception in Warsaw, at the end of June 1850, when he went there to lay the Austrian complaints against Prussia before the Emperor.'

'However, Austria succeeded gradually in making the plan more palatable to Russia. It was clear that it offered the means for suppressing the development of Germany, and for altogether crippling Prussia.'

'It is true that a Russian despatch of May 13, 1850, gives expression to some doubts which Russia entertained, on the strength of Article 6[1] of the *Acte Final*

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[1] Article 6 of the *Acte Final*:—'The Confederation is, according to its original intention, restricted to the States forming it at this present time. The entrance of a new member can only take place, if the collective members of the Confederation find that it would be compatible with existing relations, and the welfare of the whole body. Changes in the present possessions of the members of the Confederation can effect no changes in their rights and duties with regard to the Confederation, without express permission of the collective body. A voluntary resignation of sovereign rights attached to a confederate territory can only, without such permission, take effect in favour of a member of the Confederation.'

In this article, therefore, a change of the territorial formation of the Confederation is provided for as possible, and dependent

of Vienna, as to the right of Austria, in the eyes of Europe, to enter the Confederation ; but it held out a prospect that the Austrian plan might be conditionally entertained.'

'When Austria, in the beginning of June, had, in a confidential despatch, given certain promises demanded by Russia, as for instance, undertaking not to attempt to make the single German States too much dependent on the central power; Russia promised, in a remarkable despatch of June 24, not to oppose the Austrian project.'

'In the meantime France and England had been watching this proceeding with great anxiety, observing an expectant attitude.

'France initiated an understanding with England in July. Both Governments feared the effect that might be produced on the relations of the great Powers, by the carrying out of the Austrian plan.

'Both meantime held to their traditional view of the Treaty of Vienna, by which an alteration in the territorial arrangements of the German Confederation would not be allowable without their permission as co-signatories of the Congress Act.

'The next result of the understanding between

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on no other condition, than on the permission of the collective body of confederates.

France and England was an attempt made by both at the same time, to induce Russia to oppose the Austrian plan.'

'Russia tried to deceive the Western Powers. In August, at a time when the secret understanding with Austria had been long concluded, the Petersburg Cabinet declared, it considered the question as still an entirely open one; it had not yet arrived at any decision on it. The question of right, with regard to the requisite assent of all the signatories of the act of the Congress of Vienna, was avoided. From the political point of view, efforts were made to pacify England and France, by representing, that the execution of the Austrian plan was still problematical, at all events far from being settled. If it should take place, it would not be so very dangerous for the balance of power in Europe, would not menace the other great Powers, except perhaps Russia itself, and would certainly further the cause of peace and order.

'It was only in December that Russia suddenly informed the Western Powers, that it had already expressed to Austria its agreement to the plan, and that it would offer no opposition, if all the German States approved of it. This was a private German matter, which the German States could settle for themselves, without applying to the signatories of the

Congress of Vienna; the provisions of which allowed of an increase of the territory of the Confederation.

'Meanwhile the Prusso-Austrian differences made it appear unsuitable to France and England to speak out very decidedly in Vienna itself.

'At the close of these disputes, England sent despatches, on December 3, to both Vienna and Berlin, declaring that she abstained for the present from any definite opinion, but must expect that Austria and Prussia, before arriving at any final and valid arrangement, would lay before her a thorough explanation as to the nature and intention, as well as the motives, of the changes contemplated in the German Confederation.

'Prince Schwarzenberg replied, that England had certainly a right to expect, before anything was definitely settled, such explanations as to the character and intention of the contemplated changes. The promised explanation, however, never arrived.

'Meantime Prince Schwarzenberg was induced to make an attempt to quiet the extreme anxiety expressed by France, through a despatch to M. Hübner of January 12, 1851. In this he appeals to Article 6 of the Treaty in justification of the entry of the collective States of Austria into the Bund. He argues that this extension of the territory of the

Confederation would not change its defensive and essentially conservative character.'

'The French Government was not satisfied with this. Its answer of January 31 maintained that the Austrian plan was in opposition to the decisions of the Congress of Vienna, with regard to the territory of the Confederation; against which the ambiguous Article 6 of the Final Act could not be cited with any justice. France demanded the strict execution of an European treaty; it would not recognise the lawfulness of a state of things arising from any innovation.

'England on her part, after waiting long in vain for the promised explanations from Vienna, entered into fresh communications with the Austrian Cabinet, and weeks passed away in correspondence on the question of right, on the interpretation of the Treaty of Vienna, and the Final Act, between the Western Powers and the two great German courts, without producing a result satisfactory to the former.

'Seemingly the efforts of the Western Powers at St. Petersburg in the spring of 1851, were just as fruitless; and even when M. Mercier arrived there on a secret mission, and declared that "France could not be satisfied with the entrance of Austria into the Confederation; and if it were persisted in, peace

would be endangered;" the Russians on their side affected not to believe that France was seriously making it a *casus belli.* However, Austria was privately advised not to urge its plan, at least for a time.'

The beginning of the year 1851 gave Stockmar an opportunity in England, besides observing the course of European affairs, of watching an English ministerial crisis. This led him to make some reflections on English affairs, which we ought not to keep from the reader. But we must first recall the actual facts of the case.

The Whig Ministry, led by Lord John Russell, had been in a very tottering condition since 1850. On February 13, 1851, against a Protectionist motion of Disraeli's, it had, in a tolerably full House, a majority of only eleven, and on the 20th it was defeated on a motion of Mr. Locke King's, on the extension of the suffrage.

On the 22nd Lord John Russell resigned. In vain did Lord Stanley, and then Lord John Russell, in conjunction with Lord Aberdeen and Sir James Graham, the Peelites, try to form a Ministry. At length the Duke of Wellington, when asked by the Queen, advised Her Majesty to recall the Whig Ministry.

'The real causes of Russell's resignation,' writes Stockmar, 'were first the bad behaviour of the House of Commons, in which a party had determined on treating the Premier like a servant whom you wish to get rid of; and then the self-respect of the Lord, who would not endure such treatment.

'Stanley, a frivolous aristocrat, who delighted in making mischief, allowed the attack, without thinking of the obligation which it entailed, of forming a Ministry. The popular cry was for an attempt at forming a Coalition Ministry. My first impression was that this attempt would fail, and that, after eight or ten days of a hurtful and uncomfortable stagnation of all business, they would be obliged to have recourse again to Russell.

'Even at the first meetings of the Whigs and Peelites, I thought I could observe that the Whigs were the least in earnest about the coalition, and would therefore so frame their demands, that the whole thing must fall to the ground. Aberdeen and Graham, too, did not heartily wish it. I, who don't care a straw for Whigs and Tories, and their respective miserable party interests and feelings, have for years wished for the restoration of two great parties, and hoped to find in this crisis the possibility of again collecting a conservative party that could form a

Ministry. Not believing in the success of a coalition (between Whigs and Peelites), I hoped that the attempt of the Peelites would lead them to close with the Protectionists. But Aberdeen and Graham seemed to me to act like persons who did not know what they wished for; and whilst in many things they offended the Whigs, and in others the Protectionists, they destroyed the possibility of uniting themselves with one or the other of them. Strictly speaking, therefore, we are now exactly where we were before; that is, stuck in the mud.'

'If we ask for the causes which produced the feeling of the House against Russell, and thus led to his resignation, we have to confess, that they are only to be found in the Papal Aggression.[1] For many years the

[1] The so-called Papal Aggression took place in September 1850, by means of a Papal Brief, which created a number of Roman Catholic Sees, and nominated Cardinal Wiseman as Archbishop of Westminster. This step produced an extraordinary impression; it roused the old cry of 'No Popery.' On February 7, 1851, Lord Russell brought in the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, which prohibited all clergy, not belonging to the Established Church, from accepting episcopal titles, and declared all bequests and donations to such persons null and void. The Bill gave offence to all parties. It did not go far enough to please zealous Protestants; it went too far for the liberal followers of the Ministry, nay even for many Peelites; and in the eyes of the Irish Catholics, who supported the Ministry, it was naturally an abomination. The Bill, after remaining a dead letter for many years, was quietly repealed in 1870.

Roman Catholic Irish have been the chief supporters of the Whig Ministry in Parliament. They are all so mad and bigoted, that the Pope possesses now a compact phalanx in the House, and it is perfectly true, that after long centuries, the Pope has again caused the fall of an English Premier. That he will ever make the English, Roman Catholic again, I do not believe, but he may have it in his power, for a long time to come, to keep them in hot water from internal discord and weakness. At present, political reaction has made common cause with religious reaction on the whole Continent. If the political reaction gains the upper hand for a time, a religious reaction will do the same; but the Pope should not forget in his calculation the eternal law of change; for, if a more powerful liberal action should set in, he, as a temporal sovereign, might get somewhat hustled. If England sees in Rome a definite enemy of its internal peace, English politicians might be driven to take steps which would be very unpleasant to the Pope.

'One great scarcity is felt at present in England, viz., that of able statesmen. Through it the evil from which we suffer since the Reform Bill is always becoming greater—I mean the growing omnipotence of the House of Commons, and its interference with

things belonging to the executive. In order to check this evil we want a series of able premiers; the line which separates a republic from a constitutional monarchy is not sufficiently appreciated, and therefore it is not sufficiently defended. To defend it, however, is the first duty of the Ministry. This defence must take place at any moment, when the representatives of the people avail themselves, knowingly or unknowingly, of the forms of the Constitution in order to imperil it in its essence, and to carry the country, unobserved by the multitude, into another form of government. At every such attempt the Minister must offer the most serious opposition to the House of Commons; he must openly profess this principle: "You have a Constitution which the majority of the people wishes to see preserved, and I shall not allow a minority to use the omnipotence which the House of Commons has long aspired to, in order to cheat the majority of the nation and deprive it of its good right."

'I am convinced that England does not wish for a republic, and that a constitutional monarchy is more popular now than before. But it is with the Parliament the same as with a regiment: it is nothing and can do nothing without an able general. As the Ministers, so the Parliament.

'Our House of Commons is not what it ought to be, because the Ministers are not able leaders. This English mania of making all political wisdom to consist in the art of satisfying Parliament, and of tricking it by means of clever speeches, makes me sick.

'That the Queen is very popular is most evident from the quiet attitude of all England during the Ministerial crisis. How often during the time have I heard people say, "We are quiet, because we are convinced that the Queen is honest, and belongs to no party, and will not give in to any party intrigues." How different to all one heard in the spring of 1839.'

The retrospect of the last ten years afforded Stockmar, with regard to the political position of the highest personages and the personal relations of the English Court, so much to be grateful for, that some months later he exclaims in a letter, 'Since 1840 everything there has gone well, almost too well not to be reminded of the ring of Polycrates.'

The spring of 1851 saw Stockmar again in Germany, where he remained until the latter end of the autumn. In his views on German affairs two points had gradually become settled, since 1849 and 1850:—

1. That, for the present, the union of the whole of Germany was not to be thought of, but that only the

union of the North of Germany under Prussia was to be aimed at.

2. That even this could not be realised by means of a peaceful understanding.

'Our internal affairs,' he writes on September 25, 'can never be settled by way of a peaceful and rational transaction. One will have to cut the knot in the end. The inhabitants of the small States have outlived their loyalty to their dynasties, and have come to a clear perception of the wretchedness of their political existence. With the disgrace and scorn heaped on our people for years by foreign countries, and by their own princes, they must become more and more wretched and savage, and in this way the general misery may reach a high point. Then may happen what has happened so often before, that misery begets the man and the deed.'

In the end of the autumn Stockmar went again to England. He had hardly been there a month when the French *coup d'état* of December 2 threw quite a new element into the political whirlpool.

To Stockmar personally the proceeding of Louis Napoleon could, in a certain sense, cause no surprise. Some time after 1840, when nobody doubted the stability of the throne of the younger Bourbons, Stockmar had sat by the side of Louis Napoleon

at dinner. He was much surprised, in a conversation on the state of things in France, to hear the Prince say, 'Louis Philippe cannot maintain himself.' He asked, 'And what then?' and the Prince replied with perfect confidence, 'Then it will be my turn.' This showed on his part a firm faith in his own star, and it is no more than human, if the star will not rise quickly enough, to help it on a little.

A letter of Stockmar's of December 5 shows the first impression produced by the *coup d'état* in England:

'The impression here is that there was no need for a *coup d'état*, and that Napoleon would have been re-elected if he had kept his Ministry, which consisted at least of respectable people, and had quietly waited the course of events. People seek the sudden impulse which drove him to the *coup d'état* in the fear with which the candidature of the Prince de Joinville for the Presidency inspired him. It is thought that Russia and Austria will approve the step taken by the President, and a war is considered possible, because he will have to occupy and satisfy his army. It is even thought not improbable that France may take part with the Absolute Powers against England. Letters which I have received from Brussels speak in the same sense.

'I myself ask, on the contrary, what could be the object of such an alliance, and of such a war against England? Could it be to humiliate England, and to diminish its power and welfare? If that is the object, such an attempt carried out in good earnest would give a new turn to the whole of European politics, and produce in the end the very opposite of what the authors of the war intended. The possibility that some madman may be full of the idea of a crusade against England and its Constitution, I do not deny, but no man in his senses would fail to see what it means to drive England to despair. Canning compared it to Eolus, holding the winds chained in his bags. There is much truth in this comparison. The opening of the bag would be very dangerous for England itself, but, if attacked, it would, careless of consequences, unchain the storm.

'On one condition only, can Louis Napoleon gain the uncertain friendship of the Absolute Powers, viz. if he rules despotically within the present territorial limits of France. If he wishes to go beyond those limits, they are one and all his enemies. But despotic rule will be submitted to in France for any length of time, only if the foreign policy of Louis Napoleon leads to a tangible gain: that is, to a gain of territory. Therefore he cannot keep, for any length of time, the

friendship of the Absolute Powers. The French will never consent to be governed *à la russe*, simply in order to enable the Emperor Nicholas to rule the more easily and surely at home.'

In December 1851 all politicians were naturally occupied with the question whether a permanent order of things would grow out of the *coup d'état*. Stockmar was of opinion that nothing would come of it but a new catastrophe. Out of the elements with which the success of the *coup d'état* had been secured, the Devil only, he said, could form a government, and he could not believe in the possibility of a permanent rule of his black majesty.

The following were his reasons for considering the final failure of Louis Napoleon as probable:

1. His living in the 'Idées Napoléoniennes' of his uncle, which could only lead to anachronisms.

2. That the fear of the Reds, which formed the strength of Napoleon, would gradually be recognised as exaggerated.

3. The difficulty of satisfying the high-wrought expectations of the army and the masses.

4. The certain revival of a wish for popular liberties and constitutional government.

The next twenty years have shown that Louis Napoleon possessed a more independent insight, and

a greater capability of accommodating himself to circumstances than most people were inclined to admit towards the end of 1851. They have also shown that, for the preservation of what he had founded, he did not look entirely to the elements on which his success of December 2 depended; that, on the contrary, he tried to enlarge the basis of his power, and did not cling one-sidedly to the Sallustian maxim, 'Imperium iisdem artibus retinere quibus initio partum est.' But we have not yet seen the end of the experiment. It is a question whether the Second Empire possesses strength and flexibility enough to escape the Nemesis of its antecedents.[1]

On seeing the beginning of a friendship between the Courts of St. Petersburg and Vienna, and Louis Napoleon, many thought of the possibility of the creation of a new system and a firm alliance between the Absolute Powers and France, by means of the allotment of Belgium to France, Sardinia to Austria, and Hanover to Prussia.

'I laugh at this gossip,' writes Stockmar. 'With regard to Belgium, Russia and Austria could never consent to that, even if Prussia were able to overlook the fact that Belgium is its surest bulwark against

[1] Written early in 1870.

French ambition. Sardinia would be the most dangerous gift for Austria; it would fare with it as, *sans comparaison*, Hercules with the robe of Nessus.

'I do not see the possibility of openly seizing on Belgium and Sardinia. What I am afraid of is, that it may be thought a wise policy to carry on a secret hidden warfare against these two States. Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Louis Napoleon agree in their enmity to constitutional government on the Continent. It is more than probable that the latter is already making attempts at St. Petersburg to come to an understanding with the Absolute Powers. To this end Austria will annoy Sardinia, and France Belgium, as much as they can, and the other Powers will connive at it.'

A postscript says, 'I have just heard that Count Thun, the Austrian envoy to the German Diet, has declared "our present political system is endangered, as long as Sardinia possesses a constitution." Azeglio, the son, has arrived, to inform the English Cabinet that it has been signified to his Government from Vienna, that Austria insists on Sardinia placing her domestic institutions on the same footing as those of the other Italian States—in plain language, on her abrogating her constitution.'

The overthrow in France excited men at that time,

as often before, to speculate on fresh possibilities of revolution. Add to this the fact that the so-called old parties in France, especially the Orleanists, undervalued considerably the talents and prospects of Louis Napoleon. People therefore busied themselves already with combinations for a fresh change of affairs in favour of the Bourbons, and, with a view to this, with the reconciliation, the so-called fusion, of the older and younger branches.

Stockmar writes on December 18, on these questions, 'That the *coup d'état*, by itself alone, has raised the prospects of the Bourbons, I cannot see. If the present paroxysm (the fear of the Red Republic) is once over in France, and the desire for constitutional freedom is again aroused, and Louis Napoleon shows himself incapable of satisfying it, then there might be a chance for the Bourbons, and therefore for the fusion. For the present, I should advise the Orleans to be as still and dumb as stones. Few Englishmen would rejoice at any prospect arising for them; they are hated by the Whigs, who do not trust them, and the whole family is considered to be ill-disposed towards England. People still recollect the Joinville pamphlet, after the year 1840, on an invasion of England, and therefore trust Joinville, the cleverest of them, the least. Thus the follies of a conceited youth re-

venge themselves on the ripened man in his misfortunes.'

At the close of the year the French *coup d'état* led, among further consequences, to the remarkable episode of Lord Palmerston's dismissal.

A certain antagonism had long existed between Palmerston and the Prince Consort. The Prince could not approve of the restless, interfering, and demonstrative line of policy which the Minister since 1848 had adopted more and more, which offended the Continental Governments, injured England, and benefited nobody. The Prince stood up for the right of supervision and control belonging to the Crown in foreign politics. This was again displeasing to the self-willed Lord, and the means and artifices he employed to escape from that control did not improve matters. On the other hand, since the Greek Don Pacifico affair in 1850, and his expressions of sympathy for Kossuth and the defeated revolutionary chiefs on the Continent, Palmerston had become burdensome to his own colleagues.

As early as November Stockmar wrote, 'I think the man has been for some time insane.'

He says in a letter of December 22, 'Ever since I returned here, therefore for the last two months, he has been guilty of follies, which confirm me more and

more in my former opinion, that he is not quite right in his mind. The Prince might have felt strongly tempted to rush in and throw him over, but he quite agreed with my advice, which was that he ought to remain a mere spectator, as I feel certain that, if Palmerston requires another thrust, his colleagues themselves will give it.'

The facts of the catastrophe of December 1851 are still so recent that we need not say much on them. As early as August 1850, the Queen had sent a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Lord John Russell, in which she expressed distinct demands with regard to Lord Palmerston's mode of conducting business; and from this we gather indirectly, what the Queen till then had had to complain of. The memorandum says, 'The Queen requires, first, that Lord Palmerston will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to what she is giving her Royal sanction. Secondly, having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister. Such an act she must consider as failing in sincerity towards the Crown, and justly to be visited by the exercise of her constitutional right of dismissing that Minister. She expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and

the foreign Ministers before important decisions are taken, based upon that intercourse; to receive the foreign despatches in good time; and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents, before they must be sent off. The Queen thinks it best that Lord John Russell should show this letter to Lord Palmerston.'

Palmerston then wrote to the Premier that he had taken a copy of the memorandum, and would not fail to conduct himself according to the directions there given.

His conduct after the *coup d'état*, however, shows clearly how necessary the Queen's letter had been, and how little the Minister had really taken it to heart.

Immediately after the *coup d'état* the Queen and the Prince discussed the line of policy to be observed by England with regard to this event. It was settled that it must be a policy of abstinence and of neutrality. The Queen wrote in this sense to Lord John Russell, who, in a letter, declared his entire agreement. He laid the Queen's letter before the Cabinet, which accepted the line of conduct there pointed out. A despatch written in the same sense, and approved of by the Queen, was sent to the ambassador in Paris, Lord

Normanby, on December 5. It stated, 'That nothing should be done by Her Majesty's ambassador at Paris which could wear the appearance of an interference of any kind in the internal affairs of France.'

But at the same time the French ambassador in London, Count Walewski, had informed his Government of a conversation with Lord Palmerston, in which the latter had expressed his 'entire approval' of the *coup d'état* and his 'conviction' that the President could have acted in no other way. Lord Normanby, to whom the French Minister of Foreign Affairs communicated this fact, found himself in a perplexity between the two different utterances of his chief. He sent home to know, which he was to follow. This led to the Premier, Lord John Russell, demanding a written explanation from Lord Palmerston, who, at the same time, received a message in writing, from the Queen, expressing the same request. Lord Palmerston allowed four days to go by without sending his answer, which naturally could not be satisfactory, and employed this time, without informing the Queen or the Cabinet, in addressing a despatch to Lord Normanby, in which he defended the views expressed in his conversation with Walewski, and maintained their agreement with the instructions of December 6.

Here, therefore, those general directions of the Queen were violated in more than one point; a resolution of the Cabinet, adopted at the Queen's suggestion, had been repeatedly contravened in an important affair, and under circumstances which gave to the proceeding a peculiar appearance of want of consideration and of insubordination.

The Queen and Prince felt that the time had come for carrying out the threat expressed in the memorandum of 1850. Communications took place with Lord John on the dismissal of Lord Palmerston.

According to a memorandum of Stockmar's, he showed little inclination to go, and tried to get out of it. It required some firmness in order to get him to take any active steps, by reminding him of his former letter to the Queen, in which he had distinctly approved of the policy proposed by Her Majesty, immediately after the *coup d'état.*

Lord Palmerston was dismissed and replaced by Lord Granville.

At present, when the passions and prejudices which then obscured people's views have disappeared, the fact that Lord Palmerston was dismissed, not so much on account of his pronounced approval of the *coup d'état* by itself as on account of his self-willed and inconsiderate ignoring of the constitutional right

of supervision and co-operation in foreign politics belonging to the Crown, is as clear as daylight; and thus this event served to place the rights of the Crown in that respect beyond a doubt. In works of recognised authority on the English Constitution we now find the Queen's memorandum of 1850 printed, as the correct interpretation of the business relations between the Sovereign and the Minister.[1]

It would be wrong, however, to conceal the fact that, some years later, Stockmar, as far as the matter itself was concerned, did full justice to Lord Palmerston's policy at the time of the *coup d'état*. In October 1854, therefore immediately after the beginning of the Crimean War, he writes:

'It has been Palmerston's maxim for a long time, that an alliance between France and England could hold the whole of the rest of Europe in check. From this his maxim, and from his passionate hatred of the Orleans, I explain to myself his wild experiment of publicly approving the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon, immediately after its success, which was contrary to his duty as Minister; and his attempt at establishing a political understanding with the Napoleons in spite of the general condemnation of the events of

[1] See Todd, 'Parliamentary Government,' vol. ii. p. 213.

December. In order to be just, I must admit that he, at that time, saw more keenly into the future than all of us, as we saw through glasses darkened by indignation at the *coup d'état*. The Russian madness certainly made the Franco-English alliance a political necessity, and Palmerston may justly say that he recognised that necessity sooner than we. He certainly had the better of us.'

But even if we accept this judgment of Palmerston's policy in December 1851, as far as the matter is concerned, it must still be acknowledged that the form in which he clothed his policy, was by no means necessitated by it. It cannot be denied that he might have prepared a political understanding with France without telling Walewski of his approval of the *coup d'état*, without writing the despatch of December 16, and without sending it off in violation of the duty he owed to the Queen and the Cabinet. He might have pursued his remoter political aims even if, with regard to the *coup d'état*, he had been content with the expression approved by a decree of the Cabinet: 'I have nothing to say about the *coup d'état*; it is an internal affair of France.'

In December 1851 Lord Palmerston's dismissal created the greatest sensation in England. The opinion became very general that he had fallen a

victim to Continental influences, as the representative of Liberal ideas. He was notoriously detested by the Governments of the Continent, on account of the support which, during the last few years, he had allowed to revolutionary elements. It was clear, on the other hand, that the Court had taken part in the fall of the Minister, and the further conjecture was natural, that Prince Albert, the foreigner, the Coburg, brought up in the legitimist and reactionary views of a small German Court, had been the principal instrument in those Continental intrigues. These views were in conformity with the natural tendency of the general public, never to seek the explanation of events in simple natural causes, but in something lying behind, if possible in some intrigues and conspiracies. These views were supported by a portion of the press, particularly the Radical journals, and were, it was supposed, encouraged by Palmerston himself, at least indirectly.

It was said, at the time, that Lord Palmerston attributed to the Prince some share in his fall, and that, not being of a forgiving temperament, he prepared, during the time of repose which was granted him, a weapon for direct vengeance. It was rumoured that a pamphlet was composed under his eyes at Broadlands, his country-seat, by a Mr. Ph., which, under

the title 'Palmerston: What has He Done?' was to propose the above given version of his dismissal, to deny his approval of the *coup d'état*, and to throw out hints of the secret reactionary correspondence of the Prince with the Absolute Courts, in a sense opposed to political liberty. Mr. Ph. received 100*l.*, and the pamphlet was printed. On mature reflection, however, Lord Palmerston or his friends found out that its publication would do him more harm than good. He therefore suppressed it, and he maintained that he had done so under the advice of Lord Lansdowne, who, however, has since declared that he never knew anything about it. This was the story told.[1]

We shall see what came of this pamphlet after several years (anno 1854), when the attacks on the Prince Consort had reached their height.

The fall of Lord Palmerston in December 1851, however, was only one of the many smaller indirect effects which a great political concussion like the *coup d'état* must produce in all directions. At the beginning of 1852 the commotion caused by it had by no means ceased, and the fear of an aggressive policy on

[1] The rumours here alluded to, and which were very generally believed a tthe time, were afterwards, in 1854, formally contradicted by Lord Palmerston in the 'Morning Post,' as stated infra, p. 499.

the part of Louis Napoleon was very strong. The idea that such a policy would first of all threaten Belgium, was natural. It was necessary, therefore, to find out the intentions of the Great Powers in good time.

As early as January 2, Stockmar writes, 'Brunnow, the Russian ambassador in London, has been asked what the decision of the Russian Cabinet would be, in case Belgium should be imperilled by France. He replied, "I have written to-day to Nesselrode, that I have accepted the responsibility of telling the English Cabinet that, whatever the Emperor Nicholas may formerly have thought about Belgium and King Leopold, I, Brunnow, feel convinced he would make common cause with England in case of any danger to Belgium."

'At the same time France has been confidentially informed by England that the independence of Belgium is considered of vital political importance, and that England is bound by treaty to defend it.'

From Prussia and Austria, too, favourable promises were obtained in the course of the next months; those Powers recognising in Belgium the bulwark of the then existing territorial status. The threatening storm passed off.

In May Stockmar could return to the Continent

with a quiet heart. His bodily sufferings made that year a very sad one to him. Nevertheless he went again to England in November.

In December he could closely watch the formation of the Coalition Ministry, 'of all the talents,' Aberdeen, Russell, Palmerston. His interest, however, and partially his work, were more particularly devoted at that time to the preparation of a marriage between the Duke of Brabant, the present King of the Belgians, and the Archduchess Marie of Austria. It was a great pleasure to him when that marriage took effect in the next year, August 1853, as it evidently promoted the interests of the Belgian State, and of the Royal house. It took place, however, at a time when the Oriental complication, and the part played therein by Austria, had excited rather unfriendly feelings in England against Austria, which became stronger as time went on. The ingenious Radical press of England argued that King Leopold had, through the Austrian marriage, gone over to the camp of despotism, and, in the same sense, made use of that marriage as evidence to prove the similar accusations which had been brought against the nephew of the King, Prince Albert.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE ORIENTAL COMPLICATION.

1852–1856.

CHARGES AGAINST PRINCE ALBERT.

1854.

Stockmar's views on the Eastern policy of the Emperor Nicholas, and the possibility of maintaining peace through the mediation of the Four Powers, till the end of 1853—Want of accord in the English Cabinet—The two lines of a consistent policy open to England—The Cabinet chooses a third, in conjunction with France alone—The result—The position of the Prince Consort between Aberdeen and Palmerston—The policy of the latter—Palmerston's resignation and return to office December 1853—Complaints of the press against the Prince and Stockmar—Fresh excitement in the press against the Prince—Elements from which the attack sprang—Nationality and Individuality of the Prince—Enmity of the High Tories and Protectionists—Antipathy of the military—The charge of unconstitutional interference—1. Its folly in face of the practice of many years—History of the latter—2. Founded on a mistaken and senseless notion of the Constitution—The Palmerston pamphlet again on the tapis—Reaction in favour of the Prince—The Parliamentary Debates, January 1854—Stockmar's judgment on the result—The obstinacy of the hostile press—Progress of the Oriental difficulty—War breaks out—Stockmar's idea of the end to be aimed at, and the means thereto (co-operation of Austria and Prussia)—His correspondence with a friend (English memorandum)—Remarks on it by the friend—Stockmar's answer—The results of the war in the East.

DURING the year 1852 the Oriental complication had become more serious. We take for granted a knowledge of the principal facts.

From the very first Stockmar thought that the Emperor of Russia always had the death of the 'sick man' in view, but that Nicholas, who was not by nature warlike, and was more anxious to possess than to use his army, speculated on the chance of winning a portion of the inheritance, without war, by intimidation, and of disposing of the rest as best suited his Russian policy.

Even when the quarrel had become hot, and the question of the Holy Places had given way to that of the Russian protectorate over Turkish subjects of the Greek faith, when Mentchikoff had left Constantinople, threatening without any result, Stockmar still considered the mediation of the Four Powers sufficient for dispersing the storm.

Even when Russia had sent its ultimatum to Turkey, and had threatened the eventual occupation of the Principalities, even when, as a counter move, the fleets of the Western Powers had been ordered to Besika Bay, he clung to the hope that the crisis might be overcome by negotiation, 'unless,' he adds in a letter of June 16, 1853, 'an un-

toward event, such as Navarino, should upset all calculation.[1]

Indeed, even after the Russians had crossed the Pruth, July 3, 1853, it still seemed as if the mediatory exertions of the Four Powers might prove successful. The so-called Vienna note of July 31 was accepted by Russia on August 3. It is true that, under the inspiration of Lord Stratford, Turkey demanded some alterations in that document, in order to remove ambiguities. But it would probably not have been impossible for the Four Powers to persuade the Porte to accept the original wording if Russia, by the 'Note explicative' of September 7, had not defended its rejection of the Turkish amendments, expressly repeating at the same time its inadmissible claims of the protectorate over its Greek co-religionists in Turkey. On September 26 followed the declaration of war by the Porte. Even then it was still possible to avert the war by the united action of the Four Powers. Nicholas would not have resisted such a combination. Did he not in August 1854, in consequence of the Austrian summons, evacuate the Principalities 'on strategical grounds'? The question was only whether a decisive action of the four combined

[1] So it happened. The analogy between Navarino, October 20. 1827, and Sinope, November 30, 1853, is palpable.

Powers could be brought about, in order to remove the proximate causes of the quarrel, and to establish the *status quo ante* and a temporary state of peace.

The immediate practical grievance for Turkey and Europe consisted in the occupation of the Danubian Principalities. That Russia, if urged by the Four Powers in common, would still have evacuated them in the end of 1853 or beginning of 1854, cannot be denied, if one considers the effect of the summons in June 1854 by Austria alone; then there would have remained only the Russian claims of protectorate. If Russia had but dropped these tacitly, the restoration of peace, for the present at least, would have been possible. But one must ask again and again, Was it possible in the last months of the year 1853 to obtain, on such a basis, an understanding between the Four Powers for firm common action?

What may excite a doubt on this point is the fact that Austria, according to a notice in Stockmar's papers of October 19, was then still very much in bondage to Russia. It had declared itself ready to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with Russia, if Prussia would join it; Prussia, however, had declined. On the other side, one cannot but draw certain conclusions from the facts of the Austro-Prussian Treaty of April 20, 1854, and, in connection

with it, the Austrian summons in June and the Russian evacuation in August. If on April 20, after the Anglo-French declaration of war against Russia, Austria and Prussia advanced so far as to take the forced evacuation of the Principalities into consideration, and if Prussia promised to cover the rear of Austria, it is not at all impossible that the Western Powers might have persuaded Austria and Prussia to a common action with them, in the same sense, as early as the end of 1853, if only they had given them a definite prospect that, by threatening war on this narrow basis, they would secure the maintenance of peace. An essential condition, however, for carrying out such a political combination would have been unanimity and energy in the English Cabinet; for England alone could keep France in check, which was using every opportunity of hurrying the Western Powers into war. Unfortunately the English Cabinet was not unanimous, either in questions of home or foreign politics. The reformer, Russell, sat in it by the side of the anti-reformer, Palmerston; Aberdeen, the man of peace, full of confidence in Russia and Austria, and the peace-loving Peelites by the side of the same Palmerston, who, loving neither Russia nor Austria, and in constant secret understanding with France, urged on the war, delighting in the idea of

using the French alliance for the English object of maintaining the Ottoman Empire.

The result was that the elements which were stronger in themselves, and were favoured by the force of circumstances, gradually gained the upper hand. They drifted into war, like a ship without a helm; Palmerston, who was made of more solid stuff, and, in concert with France, played his cards well, who was favoured also by the more and more excited war-like tendencies of the nation, carried the rest along with him. England by itself had the choice between two lines of consistent policy, between a policy of peace, which sought to maintain peace and to gain an adjournment of the Oriental crisis, and a grand policy of war, which should lead to a serious and permanent weakening of Russia. For both these the concert of the Four Powers was necessary, for both it was requisite not to be entangled in any special alliance with France, and thus lose the concerted action of the great Powers. For the former policy an understanding of the Powers was perhaps obtainable; for the latter, as things then stood at Vienna and Berlin, in all probability, not. The English Cabinet, under Lord Aberdeen, followed consistently neither the one nor the other line. The majority were really desirous of maintaining peace, but the right means

were not resorted to in order to organise a *concert européen*, with a view to a common and menacing action against Russia, for the maintenance of peace. Through France and its partner, Lord Palmerston, the Ministry were driven more and more into the path of war, and, when they had arrived at it, they had no ally but France, with whom alone no great and permanent results were to be obtained without disproportionate and senseless sacrifices, which could be least expected from such an ally.

The result was a war carried on under the most unfavourable circumstances, with artificial impediments of all kinds, against an enemy whom one could neither reach nor grasp; a fruitless war in the Baltic; enormous sacrifices in money and men in the Crimea; while, at the end of it, the integrity of the Turkish Empire was not secured. Russia was only forced to keep quiet for a number of years, and France had become the preponderating Power in Europe. The efforts of the Prince Consort against the course of events were in vain. His policy was simply this: He wished to see the war averted through a common action of the Four Powers; the danger of an exclusive alliance with France, and the precarious nature of such an alliance, were perfectly clear to him. On the one side he had to fight against

the excessive confidence of Aberdeen, who always supposed the best intentions in Russia, and was inclined to believe every word of the Emperor Nicholas, and therefore did not act with sufficient decision against Russia for the maintenance of peace. Aberdeen used to say that, even if Russia were not honest, one ought to treat one's enemies as if they were honest. The Prince admitted the truth of this in a certain sense; but he added that one need not believe in their honesty, and act in that belief. On the other hand it was his task to watch Palmerston, who was always spinning new threads in the interest of the French alliance. In October he made a proposal that an English Princess should be married to Louis Napoleon. In November he worked for the scheme of giving the Danubian Principalities to Austria, in order thus to gain Sardinia for France, and the North of Italy for Sardinia. It gave him particular pleasure to support such French wishes as might be most unpalatable to the Court. He could thus take his revenge for what he had suffered for Louis Napoleon in December 1851. All these circumstances naturally increased the tension in his relation to the Prince Consort. Curiously enough, circumstances happened in December 1853, as in that of 1851, which still more embittered that relation.

Lord John Russell had drawn up a new Reform Bill, intending to bring it in in the next session of Parliament. Lord Palmerston was opposed to electoral reform, and declared against the measure. His idea then was to break up the Ministry and form a new one at the head of the Protectionists; he believed Lord Lansdowne would follow him, if he left the Ministry on the ostensible ground of dislike to Lord John Russell's plan of reform, and he really resigned in the second half of December on that pretence. He was, however, mistaken; Lord Lansdowne did not follow him; the Cabinet was not dissolved; and Lord Palmerston soon repented of his step. Before his resignation had been officially accepted, he declared that, out of regard to Lord Lansdowne, he would waive his objections against Russell's Reform Bill. Before a week had elapsed his colleagues took him back; most of them probably from a sense that, in the then state of affairs, he was indispensable, as possessing the confidence of the country. When he resigned, the Opposition papers had praised him; now that he had gone back, the Ministerial papers had to praise him, in order to justify the reconciliation.

In the meantime, however, the retirement of Palmerston had raised a violent storm, both in the public and the press. The catastrophe of Sinope had made

England furiously anti-Russian. The English, however, like other people, are the more credulous the more they are passionately excited. Now the press cried out, 'Treason! Court intrigues! Prince Albert and the King of the Belgians are Palmerston's enemies, are all for Russia. Palmerston has fallen because he proposed vigorous measures against Russia, because he could not prevail against the influence of the Prince. Baron Stockmar, the cunning friend of Russia, is in assiduous attendance upon the Prince.'

No one would believe the real reasons for Palmerston's resignation. Even at the present day Kinglake, in his 'History of the Crimean War,' chap. xix., stands up for the view that the Ministerial crisis was caused by negotiations on a proposal made by France concerning the proceedings of the Western Powers against the Russian fleet in the Black Sea,[1] the definite acceptance of which Palmerston wished to extort, and did extort by his temporary retirement.

Stockmar had since July 1853 resided in Germany. He did not leave Coburg the whole winter, and returned to England only in the end of October 1854. But the Radical press knew on good authority that in December 1853 he was at the English Court, forging

[1] See Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. iii. p. 317.

Russian intrigues. These fables spread from the English press to the German. The confidence of the newspaper writers in speaking of things and persons with which they were not in the least concerned, and of which they knew nothing, the unshaken faith in their own infallibility, were amusingly shown in this business. From his long stay in England, Stockmar had become very callous to the attacks of the press; he would never have thought of taking any notice of them. But a relative felt compelled, on his own responsibility, to answer the rumours on the part played by Stockmar in England with regard to the Oriental complication. He sent a short article to a German paper, which confined itself to proving the fact, that the man who was thought to have been so actively employed at the English Court in the interests of Russia, had not left Coburg for above six months.

These myths had also reached the Berlin 'National-Zeitung,' whose London correspondent was then, if report may be trusted, a Mr. B., living at that time as an exile in England. Like other papers, the 'National-Zeitung' printed that correction; but not long afterwards the same London correspondent lifted up his voice again. 'He knew better—(the most trustworthy Court news were of course to be found in the circles of the exiles.) Stockmar was certainly in the

near neighbourhood of the Court, but kept himself hidden during the day.'

After Lord Palmerston had rejoined the Ministry, the attacks on the Prince stopped for a short time, but, as early as January, the Protectionist papers took up the parable again. A remarkable article appeared in the 'Morning Herald,' which was ascribed to a prominent Tory peer. The Radicals, too, were not behindhand. The 'Daily News' announced on January 11, 1854, that, at the ensuing meeting of Parliament, Mr. Roebuck would demand categorical explanations from the Ministers on the widely spread and generally credited rumours concerning the improper interference of the Prince Consort in Government business. The line of attack had thus been enlarged. Formerly there had only been a question of influence exercised in favour of Russia and Continental absolutism; now the charge was based on undue irresponsible and unconstitutional interference.

Naturally everything that had for years been objected to in the Prince, came on this occasion to the surface.

Let us examine more closely the elements from which those attacks had arisen.

It cannot be denied that a portion of the nation had no sympathy for the Prince.

First of all, he was a foreigner, a German; and this the insular Englishman, with his intolerant instincts, could hardly forget or forgive. The intolerance of this insular instinct gives to the usual forms and mere externals of life, the sanction of articles of faith, so that only men of higher cultivation can raise themselves above them, at least in theory.

From the beginning, therefore, there was a prejudice against the Prince.

That he did not dress quite in the orthodox English fashion, that he did not sit on horseback in the orthodox English way, that he did not shake hands in the true orthodox English manner, &c., &c.; all this, even those who were in closer contact with the Prince, who knew and esteemed him, could not easily get over. One heard them say: 'He is an excellent, clever, able fellow, but look at the cut of his coat, or look at the way in which he shakes hands.'

Those who professed more delicate feeling and a keener insight, could not but see the deeper antagonism, between the genuine German nature of the Prince, and a certain narrow British conservatism. The very essence of the German character is intellectual freedom, i.e. a constant striving after truth: that striving is anticonservative; it is not satisfied with

what exists because it exists; it measures and weighs it again and again, according to a higher measure and weight; it subjects everything to a constant criticism. The Prince therefore was, by his nature, in favour of political, social, scientific, and religious progress, and his attempts at improving the education of the higher and lower ranks, and the position of the labouring classes, his enlightened Protestant tendencies, his fearless appeals to science and those laws of nature which men have to find out and follow, could not please the lazy followers of the old ways, who justly hate the intellect as the true revolutionary element in man. On the other side, he could as little please the extreme Radicals, as he constantly insisted on culture, morality, and religion, as the essential conditions of all true progress.[1]

[1] These views are represented in an article in the 'Scotsman,' published in Edinburgh, February 28, 1854: 'As a moral reformer, the Prince must be obnoxious to all who hope to promote national progress through insurrection, war, and new political combinations, irrespective of the possession of knowledge, cultivated moral and religious principle, and self-control, by those who are intended to wield electoral or legislative power. As a moral reformer, he must be hateful to all who, conscious of their own stinted capacities and attainments, tremble for their social position, should the lower and middle classes be thoroughly instructed and civilised. As an advocate of the application of science as a guide to prosperity, he may probably appear as dangerous to those who dread science and

To the conservative class in England so-called German notions are in themselves extremely 'uncanny,' and if they appear in a certain philosophical garb, they are branded as German metaphysics, and are then looked on as altogether dreadful. By a large portion of Englishmen, German philosophy, thanks to the insipid, unreadable style of our most celebrated philosophers, is considered as unfathomably dark; the mere name gives one a headache, and is supposed to suck the very marrow out of a man's bones. Now the Prince was fond in his public speeches of beginning with certain general observations, which though in themselves perfectly clear and sound were, on account of their concise and compact form, not always perfectly intelligible to everybody. Hence he was in certain circles considered a dangerous metaphysician.

He was fond of relating how the deep horror of German metaphysics once manifested itself in a meeting of the Commission for the ornamentation of the Houses of Parliament, of which he was the President. Being fond of order and method, he began by saying that, in order to make a selection of

its application as revolutionary, and would prefer perpetuating the reign of habit, authority, and antiquated opinions, as the safest guardians of national well-being.'

subjects for artistic representation, one had first to arrange these subjects under certain general *categories*. He simply meant that one should agree on the different classes of subjects to be represented, as for instance, subjects from English political history, the Army, the Navy, Trade, Industry, and such like, and then choose certain examples from each class.

On that, a member of the Commission, the poet and art-critic, Gally Knight, hearing the Prince speak of *categories*, asked, full of fear and trembling, 'Does Your Royal Highness really mean that we are to become metaphysicians?'

Added to these prejudices connected with the nationality of the Prince, there were some of his personal and individual qualities, which made him not very popular in certain circles.

The reserve of the Prince was a standing grievance in higher society. He was deficient in the free and easy manner which is now the fashion.

Besides, the Prince did not conform to the manners of a portion of the fashionable world, the so-called 'fast' people. The influence of his severe morality ('that damned morality' as a certain English statesman called it), was uncomfortable to many. In a letter to the 'Times' of January 1854, it is said that he had not been wicked enough. 'We have at last a

pure court; principles are kept up, and men without principles feel it and cannot forgive it. They talk of prudery, which in their dictionary means opposition to English depravity. They call him slow, i.e. he does not bet, he does not gamble, he does not use offensive language, and does not keep an opera-dancer.'

With this unpopularity of the Prince in certain strata of society, it is easily understood how, from the fact of his belonging to a small German dynasty, and from the well-known Russian and absolute tendencies of most of them, coupled with the rumours spread by Lord Palmerston's friends, as to the grounds of his dismissal, and his secession in December 1851, and 1853, and the excited feeling against Russia for the time, those charges against the Prince could arise, of which we have been speaking.

They were fostered, favoured, and developed by different parties, who from personal feelings or from party interests nourished any special hostility to the Prince.

We may first mention the High Tories and Revolutionists.

They were angry with the Prince on account of his friendship with the late Sir Robert Peel, and the support he lent to Lord Aberdeen. They had hoped

to oust Lord Aberdeen, to break up the Coalition, and under Lord Palmerston's leadership to take the Ministry by storm. When this prospect was destroyed, by the latter joining the Ministry again in December 1853, their displeasure was great. They now began a new game, by attacking the Court, in order to make both the Court and the public understand, that, by supporting Lord Aberdeen any longer, the Crown would lose its popularity.

The Exhibition of 1851, which, with Peel's assistance, the Prince had carried successfully against all difficulties and objections, had left the High Tories and Protectionists in an angry mood against its author. A cosmopolitan undertaking, which proclaimed and illustrated the competition of the different national industries, was from the very beginning objectionable to the Protectionists.

The regular conservative Englishman apprehended the inroad of all sorts of continental horrors, unbelief, depravity, revolution; nay, in consequence of the contact of so many different nationalities, new and hitherto unheard-of epidemics.[1] In addition to all this the Lord Mayor of London had recently proposed to erect a statue to the Prince, as the author of the

[1] Bunsen's 'Leben' (German edition), vol. iii. p. 313.

Exhibition, and thus kindled afresh the old hatred of his opponents.

Another source of hostility against the Prince sprang from the army.

It is well known by this time from different publications, that in the year 1850 the old Duke of Wellington urged the Prince to undertake the office of Commander-in-Chief of the army, and that the Prince, from a well-considered and clear perception of the nature of his position and duties, declined the tempting offer.

He answers the Duke:[1] 'The husband of the Queen should entirely sink his own *individual* existence in that of his wife — he should aim at no power by himself or for himself—should shun all ostentation—assume no separate responsibility before the public, but make his position entirely a part of hers—fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment, in any of the multifarious and difficult questions or duties brought before her, sometimes international, sometimes political, or social,

[1] Speeches and Addresses of the Prince Consort, p. 73.

or personal. As the natural head of her family, superintendent of her household, manager of her private affairs, sole *confidential* adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the Government, he is besides the husband of the Queen, the father of the Royal children, the private secretary of the Sovereign and her permanent Minister.'

The position of Commander-in-Chief, which he could not look upon as a mere sinecure, would be, according to his opinion, incompatible with those duties which none but himself could fulfil. The Prince, therefore, had already at that time given the clearest proof that he was above the temptation, which has proved irresistible to most princes, to interfere in the current administration of the army; although, from his own sense of duty and the express wish of the Duke, he paid that attention to military matters in general which the Queen herself, had she not been a Queen, was bound as Sovereign to pay.

After the death of the Duke, Lord Hardinge, the intimate friend of Sir Robert Peel, a companion in arms of Wellington, a former Governor-General of India, was appointed Commander-in-Chief. He soon won the confidence of the Prince, with whom he con-

ferred fully and continuously on all the general military questions, which are constitutionally under the control of the Crown. The Prince thus gained a far more extensive share of influence than under the overwhelming authority of the Duke of Wellington. It was said at once that Hardinge was a mere tool in the Prince's hands; his very appointment, he being a Peelite, had displeased the High Tories, who wished for Lord Fitzroy Somerset, afterwards Lord Raglan. Hardinge's appointment was ascribed to the influence of the Prince; and followed as it was by the intimacy of the Commander-in-Chief with him, it formed a new grievance on the part of the High Tories, and all who were connected with Lord Fitzroy Somerset by personal or family ties.

This feeling of displeasure, which some of the old officers kept up with the energy peculiar to military grumblers, had been roused to its highest pitch by one special event. The Adjutant-General, Sir George Brown, who afterwards fell in the Crimea, had, in consequence of some words which he had with Lord Hardinge, on the admissible weight of knapsacks, resigned his office.

This became the signal for new attacks, both by the Tory and Radical press, against the Prince, who, as

was afterwards proved, had had nothing whatever to do with the whole matter. Brown, it was said, a genuine Englishman of independent character, had succumbed to Coburg influence, wielded by that creature of the Prince, Hardinge.

Thus a new indictment was added to the bill against the Prince, viz. unconstitutional interference with the army.

The charge of unconstitutional action is all the more terrible in England because it is so vague. England, fortunately for herself, has no written Constitution; its Constitution rests on a number of laws and traditions; but unconstitutional is not only what runs counter to a certain law or tradition, but what is opposed to the spirit of the Constitution. Lord Brougham on the British Constitution, p. 130, says, 'We are quite correct in saying that a bill is unconstitutional if it offends against the spirit and genius of our free form of government.'

Unconstitutional, therefore, is something very vague. What was meant, however, in the present case, was that the participation of the Prince, as an irresponsible adviser of the Crown, in state affairs, his cognisance of them, his discussing them with the Ministers, his presence at their audiences, was contrary to the Constitution, because the Constitution

requires that the Sovereign should be advised by and govern through responsible Ministers.

In this charge of unconstitutional interference in public affairs, the English public showed a curious want of reflection.

First of all, the charge came very late; for what was objected to had practically existed more or less for fourteen years, without any objection on the part of the nation, which, on the contrary, during that period had been highly satisfied with the Royal rule. During all that time, therefore, the public had perceived nothing of what it now objected to, and it had perceived nothing, because it had never reflected on what necessarily followed from the nature of things, and the position of the Prince.

The laws knew nothing of the husband of a reigning Queen. Blackstone and the other interpreters of the Constitution were silent. It is true he was necessary and he was there, but the nation would not take the trouble of making what was implied in his position clear to itself. Being opposed to all discussions of principles till they run their heads against a practical difficulty, the people of England were altogether averse to considering the position of the Prince, and settling it deliberately.

It had, therefore, taken shape by its own power of gravitation, and the force of circumstances.

After their marriage the Queen's confidence in the Prince's political insight and character became stronger and stronger. Lord Melbourne also recognised more and more all that really lay in the Prince, though still partially undeveloped. However, as long as Melbourne remained Minister, to the end of 1841, the participation of the Prince in political business was only limited, half tolerated, allowed as a kind of favour. The then state of things is drawn with sufficient clearness in some passages in the 'Early Years,' pp. 319–321:

'For the first year or two the Prince was not, except on rare occasions, and by special invitation, present at the interviews of the Queen with her Ministers. Though taking, the Queen says, great pains to inform himself about everything, and though Lord Melbourne expressed much anxiety that the Queen should tell him and show him everything connected with public affairs, he did not at this time take much part in the transaction of business. . . . . From the first, too, the Queen, acting on the advice of Lord Melbourne, communicated all foreign despatches to the Prince.' In August 1840 he writes to his father: 'Victoria allows me to take much part in foreign

affairs, and I think I have already done some good. I always commit my views to paper, and then communicate them to Lord Melbourne. He seldom answers me, but I have often had the satisfaction of seeing him act entirely in accordance with what I have said.'

On the retirement of Lord Melbourne the Prince had already made himself so valued, that the Minister wrote to the Queen on the 30th of August, 1841 :

'Lord Melbourne has formed the highest opinion of the judgment, the temper, and the discretion of His Royal Highness, and it gives him the greatest comfort and satisfaction to know that Your Majesty is in a position, in which she enjoys the inestimable advantage of such counsel and assistance. Lord Melbourne is convinced that Your Majesty cannot do better than to have recourse to this when it is needed, and to rest on it with confidence.'

With the accession of Peel a new epoch began. The novelty of all the relations, the but gradual development of the Prince himself, the part acted by Lord Melbourne as the paternal Mentor of the Queen, all had contributed to make Prince Albert's position with regard to the transaction of business, during the first two years, a precarious one. Peel's relation to

the Queen was a different one, by no means so intimate. His view, too, of the value and the rights of Royalty was far more serious. What he cared for was that, within the limits of Parliamentary Government, the Crown should exercise independent power and influence; not that the Minister should be omnipotent, by the side of an automaton of a sovereign. Lastly, the Prince had from the beginning gained the esteem and confidence of Peel, by the manner in which he prepared and conducted the change of Ministry. Peel was therefore more inclined at once to recognise the right of the Prince's position.

When Stockmar returned to England, in September 1841, he had, as we see from his notes, long negotiations with Peel, on the re-establishment of the constitutional authority of the Queen, and on the position of the Prince. 'It was my maxim,' he writes, 'that the Prince is the necessary private secretary of the Queen. This view had been accepted by the late Lord Grey, Abercromby, and Lord John Russell. Peel allowed that position to the Prince, at least *de facto*; but from that time, I constantly preached to the Queen, that the first favourable opportunity ought to be seized, in order to obtain a legal sanction for that position of the Prince, and in order to define, by a Bill, the place, the rights, the duties, of a Prince

Consort, thus filling a gap which existed in the Constitution.

'There was another motive for this, viz., to render unnecessary the wish of the Queen, expressed in December 1841, to bestow on the Prince the title of King. I was of opinion that by the bestowal of an idle kingly title, the Prince would be brought into a false position with regard to the nation, and his own children.'

Peel, as Stockmar relates, considered not only the kingly title, but also the legal definition of the position of the Prince, unadvisable, on account of the difficulties to be expected in Parliament. The wish of the Queen with regard to the title had not remained a secret, and the enemies were already mischievously rejoicing over the expected result. The following words of Lady Palmerston were reported to Peel: 'If he (Peel) listens to the wish of the Queen, he is lost, he will be beaten in Parliament. If he resists the Queen, there will be a breach between Her Majesty and him.'

But Peel was too prudent, and the Queen too temperate, to allow either the one or the other to come to pass. The result was that nothing was done in order to regulate the position of the Prince by law, but that, under Peel's rule, as private secretary and

intimate counsellor of the Queen, the Prince took part in all affairs regarding the Crown, and was present at all audiences of the Ministers. His real influence became at that time all the greater, the more intimately he was connected with Peel, by gradually increasing confidence and friendly regard.

After the Prince had once assumed this position under Peel, it always remained the same, and he had therefore during twelve years, and through several changes of Ministry, taken the most important and beneficial part in the Government of England. His behaviour had been so quiet and moderate, he had been so successful in avoiding all public collisions, it was so generally acknowledged on all sides, that the Crown had never acted more correctly in the spirit of the Constitution, the prestige and popularity of the Queen had risen so high, that no one saw any occasion to trouble himself about the political activity of the Prince. Whoever wished to pay the Prince a compliment in public, praised his wise abstinence from interference in political matters. But now, since December 1851, when on different occasions, attention had been called to the fact, that for more than ten years, the Prince had devoted himself with great industry to all political affairs, as far as they belonged to the constitutional sphere of the Crown,

the public was not surprised, as it ought to have been, at the Prince's tact and modesty in keeping himself in the background, nor at its own want of foresight, but considered itself deceived and betrayed, and readily believed all the absurd fables, about the intrigues of the Prince and his correspondence with foreign Courts. For all this was in reality far less incredible, than that thirty millions of people should never have discovered for twelve years, that the Prince, during all that time, had taken the most important part in their Government.

But not only did these charges of unconstitutional interference in political matters, in the face of a practice established for twelve years, prove the dullness and want of reflection of the public, they were founded also on an erroneous and totally senseless interpretation of the Constitution.

Complaint was made of the unconstitutional interference in political matters on the part of the Prince as an irresponsible individual.

But the Prince was a member of the Privy Council, and his interference therefore not unconstitutional. Like every other Privy Councillor, he was responsible to the Law and to Parliament; therefore, not irresponsible. But apart from this, the very principle from which one started, that the Queen could be

advised by responsible Ministers only, was in accordance, neither with custom, nor with the Constitution, nor with common sense. Not according to custom, for several kings had had, as we saw, private secretaries, with the sanction of Ministers and Parliament. Not according to the Constitution, for the Constitution does not make the sovereign a mere automaton, to be set in motion by the breath of certain privileged persons, the Ministers; but it recognises the Sovereign, as a person who, like others, may use his eyes and ears in order to increase his knowledge of things, and who is as little prohibited as others from intercourse with people, whether responsible or irresponsible. It only demands, that the sovereign should execute all acts of Government, through Ministers who are to be responsible for them. Lastly, not according to common sense, because it demanded an impossibility, and in the special case where the relation of husband and wife had to be considered, it led to the most absurd consequences. For who could have prevented the Queen from consulting her husband confidentially on public matters, or from allowing herself to be influenced by his advice?

It is true that these facts were gradually perceived by the mass of the people, during the summer of 1854, but very gradually.

The old Palmerston pamphlet, too, turned up again. It was insinuated that Lord Palmerston had had in his hands the authentic proofs of the unconstitutional intrigues of the Prince, and of his secret correspondence with Foreign Courts, and had given copies of them, in 1851, to a baronet, who had formed them into a brochure. The Prince had bought these up, and made peace at once with Palmerston, in order to escape the consequences of publicity. But six copies were still in existence, so it behoved the Prince to be careful. Lord Palmerston thereupon could no longer remain silent. He authorised the 'Morning Post' to declare in his name that he had not allowed such a pamphlet to be written, that he had never given to anyone any documents proving the guilt of the Prince, because no such documents were in existence, and that he had been the person to prevent the publication of the writing in question. The next day the 'Times' printed the pamphlet *in extenso*, and it proved to be a miserable composition, not containing a single document.

Meantime, the credulity of the Londoners went so far, that thousands collected round the Tower, from the report that the Prince had been committed, to see his entry into the state prison. As they waited in

vain, they were quieted by the further report, that the Prince would not be sent to the Tower, since the Queen had declared she would go with him.

The folly had now reached its highest point. Towards the end of the month the reaction set in, and articles and pamphlets appeared on all sides showing the utterly untenable and groundless nature of the attacks upon the Prince. On January 26, Lord Palmerston also declared in his organ, the 'Morning Post,' that the Prince had had no influence on his resignation and return to office. The Prince had the quieting consciousness of having passed through a fiery ordeal. All that he had done and said for fourteen years, had been discussed by an excited people, and not one material accusation had stuck to him. He was looking forward with pleasure to a thorough discussion in Parliament, as sure to entirely cure the evil.

Parliament was opened on January 31, 1854, and in the very first sitting, on the side of the Ministry Lords Aberdeen and Hardinge in the Upper House, and Lord John Russell in the Lower, entered on a thorough historical, legal, and political discussion on the position of the Prince Consort.

Its essential bearing is to be found in the facts and considerations which we have given above. We would

only note three points on which great stress was laid on the Ministerial side.

1. That whatever advice the Prince might have given the Queen, the Ministers were responsible for every State transaction of Her Majesty; and if they had not wished to undertake the responsibility, they must have resigned.

2. But, that no change of Ministry had taken place, except in consequence of a Parliamentary defeat.

3. That the strictly constitutional manner of acting of the Queen was generally acknowledged; and that, therefore, it was not easy to see how the Prince could have had an unconstitutional influence on her.

Of special weight in the Upper House were the expressions of Lord Campbell, the President and Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench. He said that 'he thought it was putting the matter on a wrong footing, when it was said His Royal Highness enjoyed the right of giving the Queen his opinion in respect of his capacity of a Privy Councillor. It was not as a Privy Councillor that His Royal Highness had to give counsel, but it was as the *alter ego*, as the Consort of the Queen of Great Britain. It was desirable that the Queen Regnant should have the assistance of her Consort, and he should only further say, that it seemed to him, that all those imputations on

His Royal Highness were most groundless and most calumnious; and the best proof of that was, that if he had given advice to Her Majesty, most salutary advice it must have been, for he had no difficulty in saying, that the Queen was the most constitutional Sovereign that ever reigned in this country.'

The Opposition through Lord Derby, in the House of Lords, and Mr. Walpole, in the House of Commons, expressed their unanimous recognition of the facts and principles brought forward by the Ministers, with regard to the position of the Prince, and the manner in which he employed it. They did so all the more advisedly, as they saw how, through the attitude of the Tory press, they were exposed to the suspicion of having encouraged the spread of those reports which had given rise to the whole debate. Lord Derby spoke most sharply of the gullibility of the public, and laid the blame of spreading 'those absurd attacks' upon the Prince, on the Radical press. When, upon this, Lord Harrowby determinately maintained that the guilt was shared by the Conservative press and the Conservative party, because they had remained passive, Lord Malmesbury answered, in great excitement, 'he never heard a more offensive speech in his life.' The Prince must have been particularly gratified by the speech of Mr.

Walpole, in the House of Commons, who had formerly been the Home Secretary under Lord Derby's Tory administration. After declaring his entire agreement in the declarations of Lord John Russell, he continued, 'I shall not be supposed to flatter the Prince; but still less shall I, from fear of stating what I believe to be the truth, detract one iota from the high and just praise which the noble Lord (Russell) has given to the Consort of the Queen, whose intelligence, capacity, and conduct, since he has been in this country, entitle him to every possible respect from all Her Majesty's subjects.'

As a whole, the Prince might be thoroughly satisfied with the result and general impression produced by the debates of January 31. The rights of his position, and the way in which he exercised them, were recognised by Parliament, and without opposition from any party, and recognised in a manner most flattering to him; and one could fully agree with the last words of Lord John Russell's speech, who concluded by saying: 'When the people of this country, always just in the end, have reflected upon these matters, I think that the result of these calumnies, base as they are, and of these delusions, blind as they have been, will be to attach the people of this country still more strongly to the Queen of the

Realm, and to give a firmer and a stronger foundation to the Throne.'

Stockmar was not perfectly satisfied with the results. He held to his old opinion that the Prince should have a definite position given him expressly by law. In a memorandum of February 16, 1854, he says:

'When the storm first began, I asserted my old opinion, as against the Ministers, and for this purpose I wrote the secret history of the earlier negotiations on this point; and I see in the Parliamentary debates that Lord Aberdeen, and still more Lord John Russell, have availed themselves in many points of my disclosures. But Ministers have not shown themselves as firm, as determined, as I could have wished, and as, without any danger, they might have been. The only one who was not afraid to utter the bare maxim, that the husband is necessarily the *alter ego* of the wife, was the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Campbell. But he did not unfold or perfectly carry through this doctrine. One must, therefore, say in conclusion, "The affair has not yet found its proper termination, and in order to do so, perhaps a new impulse may be necessary."'

That the Press, which had hitherto been so inimical to the Prince, should simply and repentantly acknow-

ledge its errors, was not to be expected. The half-Radical 'Daily News' expressed itself angrily, as discontented with the debate. The Tory 'Morning Herald,' after having calumniated the Prince for six weeks, now said, that as His Royal Highness was constitutionally removed from discussion, the affair ought never to have been brought before Parliament. The ultra-Radical 'Morning Advertiser' got over the difficulty, by simply leaving out the debate on the Prince, in its Parliamentary report of January 31.

We return to the Oriental complications, in which the question of Prince Albert's position formed an episode.

The 'untoward event' of Sinope (November 30) was followed by the entrance of the fleets of the Western Powers into the Black Sea (January 3), the treaty of alliance between England, France, and Turkey (March 12), and the declaration of war on the part of England against Russia (March 27), 1854.

Stockmar's wish was, as we have seen, that war might have been avoided by a united determined attitude on the part of the four Powers against Russia. But as this had been found to be unattainable, the point most to be aimed at appeared to him now to be, that Austria and Prussia should unite with the Western Powers in active steps to destroy the preponderance

of Russia, and in pursuance of this object should join themselves more closely to England, to strengthen it in its moderating influence, to keep France back from excesses, and in general to prevent the war from degenerating, that is, from losing sight of that especial object.

These views are developed in a letter of Stockmar's, written, it is true, seven months later, but perfectly applicable to the situation of affairs in the end of March 1854.

'November 7.

'I cannot believe that it would be a blessing for Europe, if Russia came out of this war victorious. We have known what it was to have to bow down to a French idol. In spite of this experience, Europe, which loves idolatry as much as Asia, could not feel satisfied till it had set up another idol, this time a Russian one.

'I hate all idolatry, and wish it were abolished, because the Ten Commandments already forbid it.

'Therefore I wish, too, Russia to be weakened, but in my own way. The saying that Russia had lost its prestige in Europe, is meaningless to me. The memory of individuals is short, that of nations still shorter. If, therefore, a few people are at this moment of opinion that Russia is not so powerful by

land and sea, as it pretended to be in the eyes of Europe, that is an opinion that, after a few years only, will be entirely forgotten, and Diplomatists and Cabinets will act again under the same illusions, as from 1828 to 1853.

'According to my opinion, the crime of Russia against Europe consists in this, that, overestimating its own power and rights, it has made such demands on the whole of the rest of Europe, as if the Russian Emperor owed it not the least consideration. This usurpation is as great as any attempted by Napoleon. I wish to see this opposed, and the result that I hope for, from the present war, is that in the course of it Nicholas, as well as his whole people, may be convinced by experience, that Russia has taken too much on itself; it cannot alone dictate laws to Europe, and must in future respect the fundamental maxims of international law, as much as any other State.'

'To produce a lasting conviction to this end, in the Russian people, it is necessary, in my opinion, that Austria and Prussia should co-operate with the Western Powers, and therefore the present policy of Germany pleases me so little.

'This policy, up to now, affords Russia direct protection, and indirectly lends it powers, which it does not itself possess. It therefore keeps Russia in

a state of self-deception, and prevents it from recognising the power that it really has, if it stands quite alone, which under present circumstances it does only in name, not in reality. The German Powers would most quickly and surely obtain that which is necessary to all, if they would co-operate with the Western Powers to destroy the usurpation of Russia, but at the same time to put aside every demand on Russia, which, as immoderate or unjust, would prevent a lasting peace.'

In order to propagate these views in Prussia, Stockmar communicated the following memorandum, the author of which we can only conjecture, to a Prussian officer of high rank.

'*Memorandum.*

'March, 1854.

'The position taken up by Austria and Prussia, with regard to the Oriental question, is of the utmost importance for the course of those events which will arise from this question. The time in which it was still possible to think of a peaceful solution is past. The Emperor has himself destroyed the possibility of yielding, and is resolved on war. Under such circumstances, each fresh proposal of further negotiations, can only be looked upon by the Maritime

Powers, as calculated to rob them of the extraordinary advantage which the beginning of hostilities, before the breaking up of the ice in the Baltic, affords them. Such negotiations were therefore desired by Russia, but could not be thought of by the Allied Powers, as contrary to their interests. The main point is, to end the now unavoidable war as quickly as possible ; and this can only be done, if Europe holds fast together. Such a union would be the best guarantee that the question, for the sake of which the war will be undertaken, shall not degenerate into others, which were originally foreign to it. Whether the Turkish Empire, as such, can be maintained or not, is *not* the question, and it would be useless to try and decide this beforehand. But it is certain that if Europe now holds together against Russia, the solution must be favourable to the interests of Europe, by making it impossible for Russia to carry out her projects.

'On the other hand people say, "It is folly to attempt a war with Russia ; it cannot be conquered." Russia is certainly not to be conquered, in the way Napoleon imagined in 1812, but we need not therefore think it cannot be subdued, as people say in Russia and Germany. For the conditions necessary to the life of a country do not consist in an unconquered army, and in the maintenance of a widely extended

territory, but in the possibility of material existence, and in political integrity and power. Now both these can, in the case of Russia, be imminently endangered; nay, by the loss of its western frontiers it could be reduced to a pure Slavonic-Asiatic State, which could no longer play an important part in European councils.

'Taking this to be the general state of affairs, what is the position taken at present with regard to it, by Austria and Prussia? Austria is deeply interested in Turkey; and it is also as deeply interested in freeing itself from Russia, to which it was bound by the dread of revolution. It is afraid of Russia, it is afraid of revolution; as far as the latter is concerned, it could demand no more powerful preservative than that afforded by an alliance with the liberal West, the separation of which from the cause of the revolution, would be secured by this alliance. This is clearly perceived by the revolutionary Mazzini-Kossuth committees. Austria does not trust Prussia, does not consider itself strong enough without Prussia; but feels clearly the tendency of its own policy.

'Prussia—unfortunate country! The King is under Russian sway, partly from fear of Russia, partly from a senseless sentimental feeling for its Emperor, as representative of the Holy Alliance. He imagines he showed great and noble independence

when he declined a Russian alliance, the object of which could only be to lead Prussia into conflict with the West, for the advantage of a Russian policy, of which Prussia together with the three other Powers had declared by Protocol, that it was injurious and dangerous for itself and for Europe. The King refused at last all co-operation with the West.

'The court party is, partly from habit, partly from self-interest, servilely devoted to Russia; it adores the Emperor as the champion of reaction, and sees in his weakening its own fall. It therefore besieges the King with insinuations against France and England, with intimidation as to Russian revenge, and with hypocritical preaching about the duties of Christians in the East. The anti-Russian patriotic party desires indeed a war against Russia, conducted by the West and Austria, but does not wish Prussia to run any risks; Prussia, they think, should take advantage of the opportunity afforded by the war, in order to receive the reward which it will imagine it has deserved, in the dreamt-of character of arbiter, in which character it hopes, at the decisive moment, to turn the scale of Europe.

'This line of policy is abominable, and it certainly does not show much sagacity that it has already been proclaimed. It is the policy of 1805,

which caused all the misery of 1806. Prussia will in consequence naturally be hated by all parties, and as its dishonourable intentions are already proclaimed, the feeling must be roused in every country, that it will be well to prevent their fulfilment. If peace follows, a peace for which Prussia has done nothing, except to place difficulties in the way, and if it should then advance any claims, it would be astonished at the fashion in which they would be received.

'That every patriot desires the consolidation, perhaps the enlargement of Prussia, is natural; but physical growth is generally, and ought to be, the result of moral strength and effort; and it would seem that the war with Russia might offer many chances of obtaining the desired point, in such a manner that Europe would see in it a guarantee of its own interests and those of civilisation. On the other hand, the policy of opposing Europe at present, with the intention of fishing later in the troubled waters, must produce exactly the opposite effect. That Prussia will not allow itself to be blindly used as an instrument by the West, is quite right; it is, however, the fault of its Government, if it does not obtain from Austria and the West, those guarantees and stipulations, which would make possible such an alliance as would necessarily promote its lawful interests.'

The military friend then sent the following observations to Stockmar:

'The struggle between Russia and England, which has been threatening for a long time, was, but a short while ago, looked upon in England as very remote. All trouble was taken to postpone the war, and people believed they had succeeded in doing so. It was not judged necessary therefore to acquire in time, and to attach firmly, the allies, that were needed in this struggle, if its object was to be attained. You know the Schleswig-Holstein business too well not to admit, that in it England did not ill-treat us less than did Russia and Austria; nay, at the time of Olmütz, it completely disowned us. I am far from laying claim to sympathies there, but they served their own interests ill, whilst they neglected or injured ours, and it is therefore but natural if Prussia now consults her own interests before anything else.

'England and France are at war with Russia, without possessing the means of so overthrowing the latter in a short time, that it will be forced to make peace. Suppose they succeeded in destroying the Russian fleets in the Black sea and Baltic, which will always remain a difficult operation, because the coasts where the fleet takes refuge are well defended towards the sea, and the perfection which in the last thirty years the

artillery has attained to, has shown that the superiority of well-mounted land batteries to marine artillery is more certain than it ever was. But, granted that they succeeded in this, Russia would still not be forced to make peace. The fleet is a matter of life to England, but for Russia it is little more than a luxury. There the land forces must be subdued, which requires a long time. But will the Anglo-French alliance hold out for long? and how is France to be compensated for the sacrifices which the war, so unpopular in the country, requires? The coquetting which, according to your communication of the beginning of this month, had only come to an end with the answer of the Emperor Nicholas to the Emperor Napoleon, may begin again any day, and if the "good friend" should fall into further difficulties, he would then allow himself to court the "frère."

'It is very natural that England should wish to come to an arrangement with those who alone could make it possible to cripple Russia's land forces in Russia. But Prussia is less interested in the question than Austria, and it is therefore but fair that it should only make those sacrifices which are necessary for the object of self-preservation. But even with the co-operation of Prussia and Austria, it is hardly probable that in the course of this year the decisive end could be attained

because the distances to be traversed are too great to hope for the conquest of Petersburg and Moscow, and without this, peace cannot soon be made. France, in the meantime, remains fresh. The 30,000 men, who, instead of 45,000, as announced, go to the East, have been replaced by such an immense number of recruits, that in the course of the summer (without the troops in Algiers, Italy, &c.) there will be in France alone nearly 400,000 disposable troops. What guarantee can England, on the other hand, offer, that we, in the war with Russia, shall not be obliged, before a year is out, to make a stand in the West also, therefore on the Rhine and the Duna, after we have ventured on the first campaign, without a prospect of being able to attain our object by it? Caution is a duty strongly imposed on us, in choosing the offensive, because our whole organisation is stronger for defence than for attack, and the circumstances now before us give us little reason to leave this out of consideration, as under the most favourable circumstances we could win nothing by the war with Russia. Granted, that the allies succeeded in conquering Moscow, in forcing Russia to make peace, and as the Memorandum rather sanguinely expresses, in reducing it again, through the loss of its Western frontiers, to a Slavonic-Asiatic State, what should be done with these

western border provinces? These possessions could never attract us, as they would only enlarge our already too widely spread frontiers. Or is there any idea of re-suscitating Poland, dead, not only since the position, but for the last two hundred years, that after a short time it may again fall into the hands of Russia?

'If the yet fresh cement of the Anglo-French alliance does not harden under fire, but, as is more probable, after a time dissolves, we shall have to fight on the Rhine and Vistula, even though for a time we kept ourselves quiet spectators of the war. But we should then be stronger, for we should have a war-cry, which the people understands, "War for our existence." Russia is far weaker in offensive than in defensive warfare, and all the more so, if it remains occupied in Turkey. We have therefore a far better chance of carrying the war through successfully. I at least doubt as little of its success, as of the opportunities of gaining something, if it succeeds. I agree with the Memorandum in condemning the policy that would win without working, i.e. without fighting; a policy that has certainly always brought misery on Prussia when it has been followed. I therefore hope that we should not hesitate a moment to accept the fight, when it is offered, but I cannot see that the right moment has yet come.

'If the policy of the Memorandum represents that of England, they do not seem to weigh the state of things very seriously, or to be very energetic. The question really is, to prevent the Russians from becoming masters of Constantinople and the Dardanelles, from employing Greek sailors in their navy, and then at their will commanding the route to India through Egypt.

'The preservation of Turkey cannot really be the design, for the emancipation of the Christians in that country, must certainly, at all events, be looked upon as a nail in its coffin. The question of right is, I suppose, of secondary consideration, and without the interest which England and France feel in keeping themselves free from Russian neighbours in the Mediterranean, and guarding against the consequences of such a neighbourhood, the Sultan in Constantinople would be of no more importance to them than the Khan in Khiva. Questions like these, and under such circumstances, have never been settled in a short time; and if John Bull is still conscious of his old power, he will prepare himself for a conflict of a quarter of a century, and will take pains in time to secure and unite those allies, whose prosperity would under all circumstances be useful, and never a disadvantage to him. Prussia is such an ally, so too is Austria. But the difficulty

will be, how to make these two countries act honestly in accord with each other, which can only happen if Austria freely—though in a different way—gives up to Prussia that influence which Prussia laid claim to in 1849, and to secure which is the object of her existence. Were England to succeed in arranging this, it would have won allies in Europe, who for their own interests would be forced to help in keeping Russia from the Bosphorus and France from the Scheldt. But empty declamations will not achieve this, least of all can threats lead to the desired end. For the rest, the war offers England the prospect of strengthening its own supremacy at sea, besides preventing the views of its opponents from being realised. In the present naval war, all losses, though equally proportioned, turn out to the preponderating advantage of England. If in a naval battle in the Black Sea, each side loses two vessels, therefore two Russian, one English and one French, England, for the loss of one of her ships, sees three of her rivals' destroyed. After many such losses, a change of front might show itself in France, which perhaps might not be unwelcome to England itself, as offering it the opportunity of getting the better of its other rival, who would by this be only the more stimulated to indemnify himself at our cost. If, therefore, England has the prospect of compensa-

tion on all sides, it may look forward quietly to the possible changes and chances, whilst for us, they are of the utmost danger; so that it naturally follows that we are still less inclined to war than Lord Aberdeen, and possibly than the Emperor Napoleon.'

To these remarks from the Prussian point of view, Stockmar answered as follows:

Stockmar's Answer.

'My dear and honoured friend has written me, under date of the 29th of last month, a letter, which deserves all praise, first for its contents, and secondly for the moderation of its expressions. He says, the said Memorandum has not fairly estimated the Prussian point of view. Certainly not, for it was written from the English; and as we cannot quit our own bodies, neither the Prussian nor the Englishman can lay claim to perfect fairness. I did not send the Memorandum on account of its fairness, but as a true expression of the feeling, at the time, of the political leaders there, and of public opinion, a knowledge of which I consider of great importance to Prussia.

'My friend says that in England they were surprised into war, against their wish and expectation, and therefore have neglected to secure the necessary allies in right time. This remark I consider perfectly well

founded. He says further, that Prussia was not less ill-treated by England, than by Russia and Austria, and at the time of Olmütz completely disowned. Even this I allow, though with reservation; for England only allowed itself to be misled (and that by Palmerston), into neglect and ill conduct, because you allowed yourselves to be illtreated by Russia and Austria, and then kissed the feet of Austria for it. Your conduct in the Hessian business, the disgrace of Bronzell, appeared as an act of self-contempt, and therefore it not only seemed useless, but even dangerous to take any trouble about you. They would no longer look upon you as one of the great Powers, because you gave proof that you did not so look upon yourselves, but obeyed Russia and Austria as a servant his master.

'*À propos* of being a great Power. You must at last decide whether you are and wish to be one, or not. Many do not give you the credit of being one, and that you *really* are one, I do not believe. But you *claim* to be one, and according to my views, lawfully and of necessity, and your task is to carry through this claim, and make it a reality, which you can do in no other way than by a successful war. That you failed in realising your claim in 1814, was owing to two things: First, that although through your warlike achievements you stood in the first line,

yet you allowed yourselves to be robbed of the well-earned reward for those efforts, by the purely diplomatic activity displayed by Austria ever since the end of 1812; secondly, that through the exaggerated modesty and self-denial of your King you were compelled to hide your light under a bushel, and not to insist on your well-founded demands, which you would in the end have carried through. Therefore put an end to all attempts at neutrality, and occupy yourselves in earnest only with the thought how the war, which is necessary to you, can be entered into and carried on, under the best auspices for its ultimate issue. Everything else is evil, for it can only prolong an inglorious, oppressed existence for you, perhaps even lead to miserable ruin.

'My friend says England and France are at war with Russia, without possessing the means of forcing the latter to make peace in a short time. I admit this also in general, and in particular what is said about the progress in the art of fortifying coasts against marine artillery. But I differ from the opinion that to incline Russia to peace, it is necessary to take Petersburg and Moscow. It is one of my maxims, in which I trust, that Russia, from its want of money and men, and from its geographical position, can only be called strong and invincible in regard to

the defence of its borders. Its exhaustion, and consciousness of it, after scarcely one year of active warfare, I saw with my own eyes in the end of 1812; and in the intervening time, the development of the physical and moral powers of Russia has certainly not kept pace with that of the West.

'When we discuss the means of carrying on the war against Russia, it is necessary first to understand what is the object of the contest, what is the end necessary for European civilisation. This end is to check the preponderance of Russia, which it has in the last thirty years asserted more and more, without possessing the moral or even the mere material means to carry out its claims. This preponderance was obtained by means of the perverse mode of government of the French dynasty since 1814, the servility and perishing state of Austria, and the entire moral weakness and dependence of Prussia. That victories won on the territory of old Russia are absolutely necessary for the attainment of this, I cannot bring myself to believe. If Napoleon after the battle of Smolensk had been satisfied with resuscitating Poland, and occupying himself with the defence of the newly-formed kingdom, I doubt whether the last chapters of his life would have been what they were. For whatever doubts my friend appears to entertain as to

the resuscitation of Poland, the idea of reestablishing Poland, and restoring Finland to Sweden, will always rise up, as long as any life still exists in those countries. Even twenty years ago, Metternich himself, in his hour of need, occupied himself with this idea as the most efficacious against Russia. It all depends on this, that Austria and Prussia should firmly resolve, for once, to follow a really sensible and honest line of politics, and the preponderance of Russia, founded only on mere assumption, would be shattered on this resolve; taking for granted that England be a true ally of these two Powers. For I do not trust this Emperor of the French further than I can see him. His policy must be dynastic, and its only support will be in the possibility of extending the frontiers of France. He can, however, extend them only towards Belgium, Germany, and Sardinia.

'I can the more easily speak openly to you, because the assertion that I am a better Prussian than most of you are, is perfectly true. That I am so of my own accord, that for my true affection I have often reaped only enmity and contempt, will certainly not detract from the value of my opinion. That North Germany and England should stand together, and in mutual compensation help each other, is a political idea, to forward which, in the last forty years, I have not let the

least of my opportunities pass by unimproved, and to which I had in the year 1846, entirely won my late friend Peel. I know well how easy it is to put the English in error as to the Germans, and the Germans as to the English; how very easy it is, for instance, to blacken and calumniate the English policy. Circumstances had for the last thirty-eight years given me a position, in which an insight into the secrets of this policy was forced upon me. I saw, as in all human affairs, the wheat and the tares mixed together. All grain has a husk. And yet I must state my conviction that the political kernel in England is sounder than anywhere else. Some time ago it occurred to me to describe in writing the political egotism of the English, and I subjoin this description because I am able to feel that it is a just one.

'"I by no means maintain, that the foreign policy of England is a model of disinterestedness. Nations consist of individuals, and must be judged as such, and we must not therefore expect more disinterestedness from nations than from individuals. The policy of England, like that of every other nation, is egotistical; but this egotism of England is at all events sound and justifiable. For whilst it makes no secret that the welfare of England is its first and last object, it remains at the same time clearsighted, fair,

and respectable enough to keep itself free from blind avarice, from blind jealousy, and that self-deception, which leads nations so often to believe, that they cannot better increase and secure their own greatness and prosperity, than by weakening and keeping under other states."

'The preceding observations will clearly show, how deeply I must lament everything that troubles and perplexes the English perception of Prussian affairs, and *vice versa*, everything that hinders the much to be desired mutual understanding, or leads even to alienation.

'I have myself seen, at an earlier period, how through political mistakes and through insinuations, a hatred of England, not less than the present, arose among the Continental Powers. When experience opened the eyes of those Powers, and brought them to reflection, there was nothing for which they were more zealous than to seek reconciliation with England, and that help which England will always be so preeminently fitted and inclined to afford to the Continent. I do not despair of things even now taking this course.

'On all who are called on to act, and to exercise influence, the warning is at the present moment addressed, to preserve the full objectivity of their views; to offer resistance to every subjective, every senti-

mental turn, to all irritability and sensitiveness, which could only further disturb existing relations. It is now for true and conscientious promoters of the political alliance between North Germany and England, to save and to improve, to further and to strengthen, a mutual understanding and concord. May my valued friend employ the influence which stands at his command, to work with all his powers in this direction!'

The well-known further course of the Oriental war could not correspond with Stockmar's wishes. The coalition of Austria and Prussia with the Western Powers, postulated by him, did not take place, and thus the results of the war were on the whole but of little advantage to Europe. Russia, indeed, had lost somewhat of the respect which it enjoyed, but was not lastingly and materially weakened, and from a feeling of revenge was led to attempt a dissolving, intriguing, Machiavellian policy. England had lost some of its prestige, and was threatened in Asia, through the excitement which seized the Moslems, and contributed to the Indian Mutiny. The development of the power of France was considerably furthered, and its preponderance established. Austria and Prussia were made enemies; and thus the way was paved and made easy for the Italian war of 1859.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE YEARS 1856 TO 1863.

The jubilee of King Leopold's accession, 1856—The Belgian crisis of 1857 from the so-called Beneficence Law—Stockmar's letters on the subject—The views of Thiers—Stockmar's views on English affairs in his last years.

IN the year 1856 Stockmar paid his last visit to the English Court. In the spring of 1857 he returned to Germany, which he never afterwards left. Weighed down by the complaints of old age, far removed from practical political events, he followed the course of politics from this period with less ardour, and his reflections on them were more and more confined to generalities.

We will only give a few extracts from his papers during this period of his life, belonging to the years 1856 to 1858, and referring to circumstances with which he had during his former active life delighted to occupy himself practically, didactically, and contemplatively, viz. constitutional monarchy, and the

position of the monarch in it, with especial regard to Belgium and England.

I.

In the year 1856 King Leopold celebrated the twenty-fifth jubilee of his accession, amid the sincere enthusiasm of his people.

'I do not remember,' writes Stockmar on September 28, 1856, in reference to this event, 'to have seen or heard of a *cæteris paribus* like triumph. The reward was won with toil and labour, but justly and conscientiously acquired. That portion of the fruit of his labours which the conqueror has not himself received, will without fail accrue in the future, to his country and his family. The strongest, the most immoveable support for a man is, the feeling of having conscientiously fulfilled the duties of his calling, of his special position. This feeling the King possesses, he will keep it, and we pray God that He will preserve him for many many years.'

The opposite train of ideas then leads Stockmar to consider how the other rulers of Europe *ought to*, but for the most part *do not* govern.

'The conceits, the wishes, the will of rulers, can, if considered and employed as independent powers, effect nothing at all, against the appointed course

of human affairs. This course is determined by great, eternal, iron laws. Poor mortals are able to submit to them, only so far as they can perceive them. An approximate perception of them is granted to man. But above all, he who is called to the task of ruling, must submit himself to them. His duty, therefore, is to work in harmony with the highest law, and for it, so that he may be like a clever faithful workmaster, who directs and applies great elementary powers to single, intentional functions, and provides that the motive power shall reach the right spot, in the right proportion, as required by the nature of the moral and material interests which he has either to call into life, or to develope, or only to preserve. Of these considerations the majority of the present rulers in Europe seem to know nothing, for they follow another and exactly opposite principle. They do not try to govern human affairs by serving, leading, and supporting, but by mastering them; they oppose their personal ideas, fancies, humours and passions to the unchangeable almighty moral order, which holds the world together. In this their blindness, they play and tire themselves out like children; deluded by their fanaticism, they build against those irresistible powers dams of sand, which the mere weight of the hemmed in flood must break through,

and does break through, to the evident, though, it may be, but transitory injury of human culture, morals, and prosperity. I therefore take the liberty of denying to the majority of our present rulers the title of regents, and statesmen, and call them crisis-makers.'

'The only result which their efforts till now have had, and in future also will have, is that they make themselves ridiculous without perceiving it. Doubtless, He above knows better than we below, for what reason these crisis-makers are on the whole necessary.'

II.

That King Leopold belonged not to the crisis-makers, but rather to the crisis-exorcists, he had an opportunity of proving soon after the festivities of his jubilee came to an end.

From March 30, 1855, a Roman Catholic Ministry (Dedecker, Vilain XIV., A. Nothomb), had been at the head of affairs. It had laid before the Chambers a law, touching the organisation of foundations and charitable administrations, the so-called Beneficence Law, which in 1847 roused a violent storm in the Assembly of Deputies, as well as in the country. The law declared as a principle that foundations, donations, and bequests for charitable purposes were

free. The Liberal Opposition wished to reserve to the State the sanction of the same, and pointed out the danger of enlarging, by this law, the wealth and influence of the monks and clergy, already without this seriously on the increase.

The law was only spoken of by its numerous opponents throughout the country as 'la loi des couvents.' The debate in the Chamber of Deputies lasted, with great heat, from April 21 to May 30. The galleries became tumultuous and had to be cleared three times within a few days. When the Roman Catholics had a majority in several decisive divisions, disturbances arose in Brussels, the Roman Catholic deputies were insulted as they left the House of Session; in the Provinces, various excesses took place against the schools of the clergy and the convents, which made it necessary to call out the soldiers and the Civil Guard. The King was deeply moved, humiliated, and outraged by these events; he felt that the good name of Belgium and of his institutions was destroyed.

'I shall myself mount,' (he exclaimed in his Council) 'if necessary, to defend the representation of the people. I will never allow the majority to be insulted; that is the death of Parliamentary Government; Parliamentary Government is at an end; the

Constitution is violated. I have kept my oath for twenty-six years; I have now been released from it.'

But the King did not act according to these excited feelings. On May 30, to gain an interval for quieting the turbulent spirits, the two Houses were first adjourned for an indefinite time, and then, on June 13, the Session of 1856–57 was closed. A report of the Ministers explained this resolution. At the same time, a remarkable letter from the King to the Minister of the Interior, was published.

'Je ne porterai point de jugement sur le projet,' said Leopold; 'je n'aurais jamais consenti à donner place, dans notre législation, à une loi qui aurait pu avoir les funestes effets qu'on redoute; mais, sans me livrer à l'examen de la loi en elle-même, je tiens compte, comme vous, d'une impression qui s'est produite à cette occasion chez une partie considérable de la population. Il y a dans les pays qui s'occupent eux-mêmes de leurs affaires de ces émotions rapides, contagieuses, se propageant avec une intensité qui se constate plus facilement qu'elle ne s'explique, et avec lesquelles il est plus sage de transiger que de raisonner. Les libres institutions de la Belgique ont été pratiquées pendant vingt-six ans avec une admirable régularité. Que faut-il pour qu'elles continuent à

fonctionner dans l'avenir, avec le même ordre, le même succès? Je n'hésite pas à le dire, il faut, chez les partis, de la modération et de la réserve. Je crois que nous devons nous abstenir d'agiter toute question qui peut allumer la guerre dans les esprits. Je suis convaincu que la Belgique peut vivre heureuse et respectée en suivant les voies de la modération, mais je suis également convaincu, et je le dis à tout le monde, *que toute mesure qui peut être interprétée comme tendant à fixer la suprématie d'une opinion sur l'autre*, qu'une telle mesure est un danger.'

The King then concluded by advising the majority in the Chambers to abstain from continuing the debate on the projected bill.

This letter of the King to his people stilled the greatest violence of the crisis, though the excitement continued for a time. The elections in the following autumn for the municipal councillors gave the Liberals a decided majority. The members of the Cabinet took this as a political manifestation, sent in their resignation, and were replaced by a Liberal Ministry.

We will now give some extracts from various letters of Stockmar's, partly written in French, on the general aspect of those events, which he took the more to heart from the personal share he had had

in what he called 'the success of the Belgian experiment.'

'June 14, 1857.

'The small interest which I in my weak state can still muster, I devote to the consideration of the present events in Belgium. As yet, at least, they do not alarm me. I always take refuge in the conviction that the constitutional form of national life possesses greater and more tenacious power than any other, and that if, under this form, more frequently than under others, unforeseen and violent disorders arise, the State physician finds, in the greater vitality of the organisation with which he has to deal, a naturally more powerful ally, by the aid of which he can mitigate the bad symptoms and restore the balance between the contending forces. That, in this case, the watching and the direction of the means to be used in the crisis are entrusted to so capable, experienced, and approved a practitioner as the King, strengthens my hope and confidence in no small degree.'

'If only the necessary time can be gained, if only the King does not lose his calmness and patience, and that clearness of judgment which, keeping in view the good of the whole as the goal to be aimed at, gives the reins to no party.'

'According to my views, both parties are in fault,

and are ready in their passion to kill the hen, in order to satisfy their fanatical delusion with the egg. There is neither rhyme nor reason in it; it is not consonant either with their honesty or with the most ordinary care for their own welfare and advantage, if the Roman Catholics, for the sake of the law in question, insist on shaking so beautiful and good an edifice as the Belgian State. They thus show that, in their inmost hearts, they are no better than the democrats. The essence of democracy is its passionate struggles for undivided power. In one-sided, therefore self-hurtful zeal, I might say blind rage, the democrats pursue every opportunity of acquiring the whole power for themselves alone. The Roman Catholics proceed just in the same way, at every favourable moment. They hate the constitutional institutions to which, however, since 1814, they owe the recovery of their Church, their greater authority, power, and influence. It is exactly the story of the hen and the egg. Either they never remember, or they try to forget in the storm of fanatical excitement, what were the circumstances of the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and what they would again be, whether under the absolute despotism of a single individual or under that of a mob.'

'But the Belgian Constitution is not yet dead,

though the Liberals made common cause with the street mob, and disturbed the public peace. It will only die when one party has succeeded in arrogating to itself all authority and power. In order to prevent this, the King must curb both parties, and he is authorised, in fact, bound, before God, Europe, and Belgium, to do so.'

'You know what importance I attribute to the success of what I call the Belgian experiment. The great experimentalist on whom this success depends, is the King himself. The most critical moment of his reign has arrived, and he must now show that those are right who trust to his wisdom, justice, and honesty.

'The King has more than once said to me: "The Catholic party is the only one with us that has any strength; the Liberal party is like a rope of sand."

'From my own observation, I consider this expression, taken in itself, as true and correct. But as soon as it is applied to the real life of the State, the general truth which it contains becomes but relatively true, and therefore limited. For practical purposes the doctrine which constitutes the essence of the Roman Catholic party, can only hold it together as a power, such as the executive can rely upon, so long as that party is opposed to an intelligent and

active minority, which through their opposition limits that doctrine, and by such limitation gives consistency and strength to the Roman Catholics. And it is only this limitation, effected by outward pressure, which has made the Roman Catholic party what it has up to now been in the political commonwealth, and what the King praises it for. Only this outward pressure has forced it to calculating prudence, to apparent political moderation and honesty.

'Under the mask of Belgian patriotism, it fought in the revolution against Holland, and up to the present day, from time to time, helped to defend the Constitution against democracy and anarchy. But I do not doubt that it would show itself in its true colours, as soon as it succeeded, by aid of those formal means, which it can only find in the Constitution, in making the controlling power of the Liberal party a mere name. From that moment the King would find the Roman Catholics as ungovernable as the Liberals generally are. For no executive in the world can form a sincere and honest alliance with the ruling principle of the Roman Catholic Church, and the natural drift of this principle. This natural bent demands the sole possession of authority, and as soon as it succeeded in becoming perfectly free, it would follow this bent blindly for

life or death, even though it perceived the possibility that it might at times lose the game. My firm conviction, therefore, is—

'That the Belgian experiment can then only be regarded as unsuccessful, when the political power is in the hands of the Roman Catholics, and the power of the Liberals reduced to nothing.'

'21 Juin 1857.

'Vous me demandez mon avis sur la conduite du gouvernement dans la dernière partie de cette crise.

'J'approuve la clôture.

'Quant au rapport des Ministres, ce ne sont pas seulement les libéraux, mais encore tous les hommes impartiaux qui y trouveront le propre aveu du cabinet qu'il a été poussé à proposer cette loi, non pas par quelque urgente nécessité de l'état, mais par les impatiences du parti catholique.

'Le Rapport dit :

'"Il y a d'autant moins à hésister, etc., que l'intérêt des pauvres n'aura pas à souffrir de la mesure, etc.[1] D'une part, l'art. 84 de la loi communale, interprété par le premier corps judiciaire, laisse au gouvernement toute latitude pour autoriser les fondations charitables, etc. D'autre part, la législation en vigueur donne au

[1] That is, from the close of the session and the consequent adjournment of the Bill.

gouvernement la liberté d'action nécessaire pour subordonner l'autorisation de ces fondations à des garanties, etc."

'C'est avouer de la manière la plus naïve que ce n'est pas par un besoin pressant et évident du pays, mais par les exigences des cléricaux, qu'a été déterminée la présentation de cette loi, que je déplore à tous les égards. Le Ministère a fait preuve de peu de sagacité en ne pas prévoyant la possibilité d'une crise que lui-même dit être sans exemple dans les annales de la paisible Belgique. Un calcul fort simple aurait dû démontrer aux Ministres que, si la loi rencontrait des difficultés sérieuses, il ne leur resterait qu'une alternative, ou d'abandonner la loi ou bien d'être placés dans la nécessité de provoquer par une dissolution la manifestation du véritable sentiment de la majorité du pays. Il n'y a pas d'autre solution, et il y avait témérité de la part des Catholiques à exposer le pays et le Roi et à s'exposer eux-mêmes à de pareilles chances. Les professions de bonne foi du Cabinet fussent-elles sincères, pourtant la misère publique n'était pas d'une telle gravité qu'il fallût faire courir au pays le risque de se convaincre par une douloureuse expérience que la recherche du mieux est l'ennemie du bien.

'La lettre du Roi est, comme vous le dites, un acte un peu irrégulier. Mais un Roi, qui, à juste titre,

peut se nommer le principal fondateur d'une constitution, occupe pendant toute sa vie une position exceptionnelle. L'histoire de l'Angleterre sous Guillaume III fournit les preuves de cette assertion. Le Roi Léopold, *mutatis mutandis*, est pour la Belgique ce que Guillaume était pour l'Angleterre. Voilà pourquoi, dans des crises où il y va du salut public et tant que la constitution belge n'a pas encore pris l'aplomb et la consistance que ne lui donneront que le temps et l'habitude de la marche, le Roi peut et doit même, pour le fond comme pour la forme, exercer l'autorité royale d'une manière qui ne conviendrait plus à une époque postérieure, dont elle choquerait le sentiment et le jugement.

'Puisque la lettre du Roi est publiée, inutile de demander, si elle aurait pu être *mieux* faite. Au surplus, la complication actuelle, j'en ai la ferme confiance, parviendra à une heureuse issue, si le Roi reste fidèle à la maxime que lui-même dans sa lettre il exprime ainsi :

"Que toute mesure qui peut être interprétée comme tendant à *fixer* la suprématie d'une opinion sur l'autre, qu'une telle mesure est un danger,"

et que dans toutes les phases de la crise il ne prend pour guide que l'esprit de cette maxime. Mais je n'ignore pas que le Roi a pour le parti catholique une

prédilection plus absolue et contre l'avénement des libéraux une répugnance plus forte que je ne ressens moi-même. C'est pourquoi je vous prie avec instance de faire tout votre possible pour le maintenir dans la voie de la maxime professée par sa lettre.

'Quant aux événemens qui ont amené la crise, je crois qu'il y a eu des fautes des deux côtés. Les Catholiques ont péché en essayant, par pure outrecuidance, d'établir la suprématie du principe de leur église sur l'état, les libéraux en perdant, dans la défense de l'état, cette modération qui fait l'essence de la vie constitutionnelle. Cependant c'est le parti catholique qui est le plus coupable, car il a été provocateur, agressif, il a mérité les justes défiances de tous les patriotes, et le parti libéral ne peut donc être accusé que d'une chose : d'avoir, dans l'excitation et la passion de la lutte, exagéré le danger et commis un excès dans la défense légitime.

'Pour bien apprécier la crise, il faudrait savoir si réellement le parti catholique médite le renversement des institutions et espère à cet effet tirer profit d'une situation anarchique qu'il aurait intérêt à provoquer. Je n'ai jusqu'à présent aucune raison de supposer à ce parti de pareilles intentions. Mais si effectivement il ne les a pas, alors je dirai qu'il n'y a pas d'exemple, dans l'histoire, d'un Souverain aussi complètement le

maître, que votre Roi, de modérer les deux partis et de mener la lutte à bonne fin. Car l'un et l'autre parti est dans l'impuissance, à moins que le Roi ne vienne s'allier à lui, de remporter la victoire au détriment de l'état. Le Roi ne doit donc jamais oublier tout ce qu'il y a de puissance dans son rôle d'arbitre, maintenir sa position élevée au-dessus des partis, èt ne pas accorder au parti catholique plus de confiance qu'il n'en mérite.

'A cette fin, il s'agit pour le Roi de savoir avant tout si la Chambre actuelle est la fidèle expression des sentimens du pays. Si elle ne l'est pas, il aura l'avantage de pouvoir menacer les Catholiques, pour le cas où ils adresseraient de nouvelles provocations à l'opinion publique, d'une dissolution, comme d'un mal par eux voulu et mérité. Le Roi devra alors se préparer à subir résolument et à supporter courageusement, le cas écheant, toutes les conséquences, quelles qu'elles soient, de la dissolution. A sa place, je ne craindrais nullement l'agitation qu'elle pourrait soulever. La rentrée des libéraux serait ce qui pourrait en résulter de pis et ce n'est pas là ce qui me donnerait des inquiétudes; car il est à présumer que les libéraux, ramenés au pouvoir, se conduiraient avec une circonspection particulière et, en général, les libéraux sont, par leurs principes et leurs aspira-

tions, moins que les Catholiques, portés à se placer en dehors et au-dessus de l'état et à désirer le renversement des institutions.'

M. Juste, in his 'Life of Leopold,'[1] reports, that the King asked at the same time the opinion of Guizot and Thiers on the questions and events connected with the Beneficence Law. Stockmar writes as follows on the letter, sent by Thiers on this question:

'July 2, 1857.

'I have read the letter with great satisfaction. As soon as the author comes forward, not as an active statesman, but as a critic, he sees and judges political events, for the most part, with a sound and practical understanding. . . .

'It is a significant fact, that two men, like Thiers and myself, so different by nature, education, life, and experience, should look on the same object in exactly the same light. The same ideas which I have expressed in German words, I find again in French in the following sentences of Thiers:—

'"Ceux qui auraient voulu un combat à outrance sont des insensés." . . .

[1] Vol. ii. p. 180.

'". . . . Sans doute il ne faut pas céder à l'émeute, mais dans tous les pays libres, il y a des agitations populaires, dont il faut tenir compte, comme en médecine on tient compte de tous les symptômes, sans avoir l'orgueilleuse prétention d'en négliger aucun. Quand le sentiment public est excité à un haut degré, qu'il ait tort ou raison, il faut savoir s'arrêter."

'" Il faut ajouter que cette excitation des esprits n'était pas sans quelque fondement. Le clergé catholique se conduit follement dans toute l'Europe, et il s'attirera de cruels revers. Il veut absolument redevenir propriétaire."

'" Les élections immédiates auraient peut-être amené une victoire décidée des uns sur les autres, et c'eût été plus fâcheux encore."

'" Le secret pour réussir (en Belgique) consistera à empêcher les entreprises violentes des uns contre les autres. Le temps est pour les libéraux."

'" Quant aux catholiques, s'ils veulent trop entreprendre, ils amèneront une victoire immédiate et violente des libéraux."

'" Quant à la Royauté, son art à elle doit être de ne pas se laisser compromettre dans la querelle, d'être modératrice, jamais parti dans le débat, de s'attacher

surtout à n'être jamais classée dans l'un des deux partis."'

III.

Towards the end of his life, Stockmar was less well pleased with the state of things in England than formerly.

'Since the Reform Bill,' he writes, July 26, 1858, 'suddenly admitted a greater mass of democratic matter into the House of Commons, than had been compatible with the former practice of Government, a democratic party has arisen, who aim at the omnipotence of the House of Commons. They have in view and try to effect the annulling of the theory and practice of the English Constitution before 1830. Whenever, since the Reform, the Whigs had held the reins, they have allied themselves with this party, have governed with their aid, and existed through their favour. In the short intervals in which the so-called Tories were in power, they followed their predecessors in practice, whatever their own theoretical creed might be. With the single exception of Peel, I may say that all the Ministers whom I have known since 1830, have, intentionally and unintentionally, laboured to destroy the Constitution before 1830.

'This omnipotence-party possesses at present the most and loudest voices. It overpowers all others in the newspapers, meetings, and House of Commons. Thirty years ago my friends said so much to me about "a self-adjusting principle of the Constitution," that I at last believed in it myself. And, in truth, it does appear to me, that in the last ten or fifteen years a public feeling has begun to grow, which, when it has once acquired flesh and blood and a voice, may become an anchor of hope for England's welfare and existence. The proceedings of the omnipotence-democrats have startled many of the sensible, well-meaning, and experienced people. Their number is not small, and most of them are highly respectable and influential. But as they consist more of spectators than of active politicians, they form no political body and have no voice. They must be collected as a political party round a banner with this device, "The omnipotence of the House of Commons is revolution itself, and death to the true old English Constitution." Such a political party only would make it possible for the Government to rule in the true spirit of the Constitution, through the balance of the three estates (the Sovereign and the two Houses), and not merely according to the fancies of one. I do not despair, but it is

enough to make one low-spirited and afraid, when one considers to what Ministers and to what an absurd usurping House of Commons the fate of England is at present entrusted. England will not perish, but it has already lost much of its former position in the world, and this loss may be increased in the next few years.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

APPENDIX. A POLITICAL TREATISE BY STOCKMAR.

The First Chamber in a Constitutional Monarchy.

THE following treatise was written by Stockmar in the year 1848, and appeared at the time in the 'Deutsche Zeitung.'

The First Chamber in a Constitutional Monarchy.

'A question has just arisen, in the Constitutional Assembly at Berlin, which, as can easily be foreseen, will be brought forward again in the National Assembly at Frankfort. This question arises at the present moment, wherever the legislative establishment of the representation of the people is under consideration. It is this, shall the representation of the people be carried out in one or in two Chambers?

'The point in question has in truth been long settled, theoretically as well as practically. It is

certain, that unless the State is to be in constant danger of headlong haste in a demagogic direction, the pushing, and inconsiderately advancing element must be opposed by a stable counterweight, which holds more tenaciously to the existing state of things. This is the reason why a First Chamber has been opposed to the so-called Second Chamber. This is the natural necessity for the First Chamber, and for this reason it is, and must always remain, an essential ingredient in all healthy political life. Yet in spite of this, we must not deceive ourselves; the dislike to this First Chamber is universal; every new draft of Constitution attempts to evade it, as much as possible, or entirely to destroy it. The reason is obvious. Our First Chambers, mainly constituted after the English model, are thoroughly aristocratic in their fundamental elements, they are based on the hereditary principle, and this hereditary principle rests on the highest class of income. This was quite in the nature of things, in those times, when the Parliamentary life of England developed itself. Then the privileges of property and nobility of birth, were absolutely untouched; they were real marks of social cultivation and position. But how is it now? Now, all social and legal circumstances are fundamentally changed. In these days, this exclusiveness

of the First Chamber wounds the democratic feeling of the people, everywhere on the alert; and what is of more importance, a Chamber thus constructed, is no longer in harmony with the feeling of the whole nation. It easily becomes in these days the one-sided champion of one-sided aristocratic interests, so that a First Chamber, thus constituted, can, in many cases, act as an enemy to the people, and even become most obstructive and prejudicial to the organic development of the State.

'This is confirmed by one experience after another, in modern Parliamentary life. But yet all this does not tell against the principle of a First Chamber, but arises solely from this, that the mode of its composition, notwithstanding the universal change of its foundation, has remained the old and received and historical form, and therefore stands in utter opposition to the spirit of the present times. It is true, various attempts have been made, especially in France, to arrive at such a new transformation as shall be suited to our times. But these attempts must all come to nothing, as long as they fail to take equal account of the demands of the present times, which will hear nothing of any accidental privileges, and of the idea of a First Chamber, which is to form a solid counterweight to the demagogic element. Everything depends on

this, that the First Chamber should not continue to be an exclusive aristocratic caste-institution. It must be as popular as the Second Chamber, but it must at the same time, in opposition to that, contain conservative elements, and thus promise a greater security for stability, quiet, and moderation.

'This, it appears to me, can be effected as follows:

'On the one hand the First Chamber should be as popular as the Second. This is only possible if it has the same origin as the latter, and springs by election, immediately from the people, as does the latter. Not birth, but election, must make a man a member of the First Chamber. And his election is not to be for life, but as with the Second Chamber, only for a certain time. Whoever elects for the Second Chamber, should elect for the First. Only in this way can the First Chamber avoid being strange to the people; only thus can they be led to trust it, and see in it the expression and representation of their wishes. Every gleam of prerogative, of aristocracy, of exclusiveness, must be extinguished in it. Hence arises another demand, which indeed differs from all former Parliamentary practice. It must no longer be possible for a proportionately small number of national representatives to reject the resolutions of a disproportionately greater number; but both Chambers

must, as they are alike in deriving their origin from popular election, be alike numerically also. It is only in this way, that the rejection of the decisions of the Second Chamber by the First, can avoid having an invidious, an offensive, and caste-like character, which might appear as an arbitrary, and therefore illegitimate, impediment to the progress aimed at.

'But, on the other hand, the distinction between the First and Second Chambers, must by no means be levelled. Conformably with its more conservative nature, the First Chamber must be grounded on a conservative law of election. The conservative element in the State is and remains twofold—wealth and intellect; in as far as both the possessors and the men of intellect have, through the riper experience of advanced and quiet age, overcome the mere pleasure in experiments peculiar to impulsive youth, and have arrived at a definite settlement of their own political views and sentiments. The difference, therefore, in the composition of the two Chambers consists chiefly in two things: To be eligible for the First Chamber, a riper age is necessary. For the Second Chamber the minimum might be twenty-five, perhaps thirty; for the First Chamber forty, perhaps forty-five. And secondly, for those

who stand as representatives of material interests, a fixed, though moderate property census, will be absolutely necessary; and for those who are elected without any reference to their own material circumstances, proved maturity and ability for their intellectual work. They may be considered to have proved this ability, if they have succeeded in winning general recognition either in the Public Service, that is in higher clerical, military, judicial or administrative position, in the universities and academies, or through Parliamentary activity in the Second Chamber. It would be one-sided, to lay stress only on the one or the other qualification, either on property only, or only on intellectual capacity. If we take mental intelligence alone, without the admixture of material wealth, we lose the most essential lever and supporter of the well-being of the people, and thereby simply endanger material prosperity, without which no progress is possible. If, on the other hand, we take material wealth alone, without its being everywhere raised and supported by sober intelligence, capable of looking at all sides of the question, we have again a purely caste-like body, we have only exchanged aristocracy of birth for a monied aristocracy. Both elements

must therefore be represented in the First Chamber. It will depend on the results of each election, how many representatives of property, and how many representatives of intellect, will take their seats each time.

'No one can deny that this design affords each individual, with regard to eligibility, the greatest freedom that is in any way compatible with the system of the two Houses. There is no trace in it of artificial separation of classes; for the representative of property a relatively small census is, as I said, to be established; and to avoid the appearance of allowing too great a privilege to age, both Chambers, the First as well as the Second, must possess the right in certain cases, when required by the electors, to dispense with the established limit of age.

'At all events this scheme provides for the entire abolition of all that is exclusive and privileged in the First Chamber. In this also we should thus be following the teaching of England, the eternal model of all constitutional institutions, where the members of the First Chamber are no longer so entirely separated from those of the Second. Most of those who, later in life, become members of the First Chamber, would have finished the apprenticeship of their parliamentary career in the Second, and learnt there to understand

the life of the people and its requirements. Thus the people will gradually of themselves cease to look upon the First Chamber as their born enemy; they will gladly learn to acknowledge it as being an essential and indispensable member in the organisation of the State.'

THE END.

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